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To Clark Marsh.

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LIKE CHRIST:

Thoughts on the Blessed Life of Conformity to the Son of God.

A Sequel to 'ABIDE IN CHRIST.'

BY THE

REV. ANDREW MURRAY,

WELLINGTON, CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

'Even as I, ye also.'

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NEW YORK:

ANSON D. F. RANDOLPH & COMPANY,

182 FIFTH AVENUE.

PREFACE.

In sending forth this little book on the Image of our blessed Lord, and the likeness to Him to which we are called, I have only two remarks by way of preface.

The one is that no one can be more conscious than myself of the difficulty of the task I have undertaken, and its very defective execution. There were two things I had to do. The one was to draw such a portrait of the Son of God, as 'in all things made like unto His brethren,' as to show how, in the reality of His human life, we have indeed an exact Pattern of what the Father wants us to be. What was wanted was such a portrait as should make likeness to Him infinitely and mightily attractive, should rouse desire, awaken love, inspire hope, and strengthen faith in all who are seeking to imitate Jesus Christ. And then I had to sketch another portrait,—that of the believer as he really, with some degree of spiritual exactness, reflects

this Image, and amid the trials and duties of daily life proves that likeness to Christ is no mere ideal, but through the power of the Holy Ghost a most blessed reality.

How often and how deeply I have felt, after having sought to delineate some one trait of the blessed Life, how utterly insufficient human thoughts are to grasp, or human words to express, that spiritual beauty of which one at best only has seen faint glimpses! And how often our very thoughts deceive us, as they give us some human conception in the mind of what the Word reveals, while we lack that true vision of the spiritual glory of Him who is the brightness of the Father's glory!

The second remark I wish to make is a suggestion as to what I think is needed really to behold the glory of the blessed Image into which we are to be changed. I was very much struck some time ago, in an infant school examination, with the practice a little class in object-lessons was put through. A picture was shown them, which they were told to look at carefully. They then had to shut their eyes, and take time to think and remember everything they had seen. The picture was now removed, and the little ones had to tell all they could. Again the picture was shown, and they had to try and notice what they had not ob-

served before; again to shut their eyes and think, and again to tell what more they had noticed. And so once more, until every line of the picture had been taken in. As I looked at the keen interest with which the little eyes now gazed on the picture, and then were pressed so tightly shut as they tried to realize, and take in, and keep what they had been looking at, I felt that if our Bible reading were more of such an object-lesson, the unseen spiritual realities pictured to us in the Word would take much deeper hold of our inner life. We are too easily content with the thoughts suggested by the words of the Bible, though these are but forms of truth, without giving time for the substantial spiritual reality, which the Word as the truth of God contains, to get lodged and rooted in the heart. Let us, in meditating on the Image of God in Christ, to which we are to be conformed, remember this. When some special trait has occupied our thoughts, let us shut our eyes, and open our hearts; let us think, and pray, and believe in the working of the Holy Spirit, until we really see the blessed Master in that special light in which the Word has been setting Him before us, and can carry away for that day the deep and abiding impression of that heavenly beauty in Him which we know is to be reproduced in us. Let us gaze, and

gaze again, let us worship and adore; the more we see Him as He is, the liker Him we must become. To study the image of God in the man Christ Jesus, to yield and set open our inmost being for that image to take possession and live in us, and then to go forth and let the heavenly likeness reflect itself and shine out in our life among our fellow-men,—this is what we have been redeemed for, let this be what we live for.

And now I entrust the little book to the gracious care of the blessed Lord of whose glory it seeks to tell. May He give us to see that there is no beauty or blessedness like that of a Christ-like life May He teach us to believe that in union with Him the Christ-like life is indeed for us. And as each day we listen to what His Word tells us of His image, may each one of us have grace to say, 'O my Father! even as Thy beloved Son lived in Thee, with Thee, for Thee on earth, even so would I also live.'

A. M.

Wellington, Cape of Good Hope.

P.S.—As the tone of the meditations is mostly personal, I have, at the close of the volume, added some more general thoughts, 'On Preaching Christ as our Example.'

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First Day.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

Because we abide in Him.

'He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself *also so* to walk, *even as He* walked.'—1 John ii. 6.

ABIDING in Christ and *walking like Christ:* these are the two blessings of the new life which are here set before us in their essential unity. The fruit of a life *in Christ* is a life *like Christ.*

To the first of these expressions, *abiding in Christ,* we are no strangers. The wondrous parable of the Vine and the branches, with the accompanying command, 'Abide in me, and I in you,' has often been to us a source of rich instruction and comfort. And though we feel as if we had but very imperfectly learned the lesson of abiding in Him, yet we have tasted something of the joy that comes when the soul can say: Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I do abide in Thee. And He knows too how often the fervent prayer still arises: Blessed Lord, do grant me the complete unbroken abiding.

The second expression, *walking like Christ,* is not less significant than the first. It is the promise of the wonderful power which the abiding in Him will exert. As the fruit of our surrender to live wholly

in Him, His life works so mightily in us, that our walk, the outward expression of the inner life, becomes like His. The two are inseparably connected. The abiding in always precedes the walking like Him. And yet the aim to walk like Him must equally precede any large measure of abiding. Only then is the need for a close union fully realized, or is the Heavenly Giver free to bestow the fulness of His grace, because He sees that the soul is prepared to use it according to His design. When the Saviour said, 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love,' He meant just this: the surrender to walk like me is the path to the full abiding in me. Many a one will discover that just here is the secret of his failure in abiding in Christ; he did not seek it with the view of walking like Christ. The words of St. John invite us to look at the two truths in their vital connection and dependence on each other.

The first lesson they teach is: He that seeks to abide in Christ *must walk even as He walked.* We all know that it is a matter of course that a branch bears fruit of the same sort as the vine to which it belongs. The life of the vine and the branch is so completely identical, that the manifestation of that life must be identical too. When the Lord Jesus redeemed us with His blood, and presented us to the Father in His righteousness, He did not leave us in our old nature to serve God as best we could. No; in Him dwelt the eternal life, the holy divine life of heaven, and every one who is in Him receives from Him that same eternal life

in its holy heavenly power. Hence nothing can be more natural than the claim that he that abides in Him, continually receiving life from Him, must *also so* walk *even as He* walked.

This mighty life of God in the soul does not, however, work as a blind force, compelling us ignorantly or involuntarily to act like Christ. On the contrary, the walking like Him must come as the result of a deliberate choice, sought in strong desire, accepted of a living will. With this view, the Father in heaven showed us in Jesus' earthly life what the life of heaven would be when it came down into the conditions and circumstances of our human life. And with the same object the Lord Jesus, when we receive the new life from Him, and when He calls us to abide in Him, that we may receive that life more abundantly, ever points us to His own life on earth, and tells us that it is to walk even as He walked that the new life has been bestowed. 'Even as I, so ye also:' that word of the Master takes His whole earthly life, and very simply makes it the rule and guide of all our conduct. If we abide in Jesus, we may not act otherwise than He did. 'Like Christ' gives in one short all-inclusive word the blessed law of the Christian life. He is to think, to speak, to act as Jesus did; as Jesus was, *even so* is he to be.

The second lesson is the complement of the first: He that seeks to walk like Christ, *must abide in Him.*

There is a twofold need of this lesson. With some there is the earnest desire and effort to follow

Christ's example, without any sense of the impossibility of doing so, except by deep, real abiding in Him. They fail because they seek to obey the high command to live like Christ, without the only power that can do so—the living in Christ. With others there is the opposite error; they know their own weakness, and count the walking like Christ an impossibility. As much as those who seek to do it and who fail, do those who do not seek because they expect to fail, need the lesson we are enforcing. To walk like Christ one must abide in Him; he that abides in Him has the power to walk like Him; not indeed in himself or his own efforts, but in Jesus, who perfects His strength in our weakness. It is just when I feel my utter impotence most deeply, and fully accept Jesus in His wondrous union to myself as my life, that His power works in me, and I am able to lead a life completely beyond what my power could obtain. I begin to see that abiding in Him is not a matter of moments or special seasons, but the deep life process in which, by His keeping grace, I continue without a moment's intermission, and from which I act out all my Christian life. And I feel emboldened really to take Him in everything as my example, because I am sure that the hidden inner union and likeness must work itself out into a visible likeness in walk and conduct.

Dear reader! if God give us grace, in the course of our meditations, truly to enter into the meaning of these His words, and what they teach of a life in very

deed like Christ's, we shall more than once come into the presence of heights and depths that will make us cry out, How can these things be? If the Holy Spirit reveal to us the heavenly perfection of the humanity of our Lord as the image of the unseen God, and speaks to us, '*so, even so* ought ye also to walk,' the first effect will be that we shall begin to feel at what a distance we are from Him. We shall be ready to give up hope, and to say with so many, It avails not to attempt it: I never can walk like Jesus. At such moments we shall find our strength in the message, *He that abideth in Him, he* must, *he* can, also so walk even as He walked. The word of the Master will come with new meaning as the assurance of strength sufficient: He that abideth in me beareth much fruit.

Therefore, brother, abide in Him! Every believer is in Christ; but not every one abides in Him, in the consciously joyful and trustful surrender of the whole being to His influence. You know what abiding in Him is. It is to consent with our whole soul to His being our life, to reckon upon Him to inspire us in all that goes to make up life, and then to give up everything most absolutely for Him to rule and work in us. It is the rest of the full assurance that He does, each moment, work in us what we are to be, and so Himself enables us to maintain that perfect surrender, in which He is free to do all His will. Let all who do indeed long to walk like Christ take courage at the thought of what He is and

will prove Himself to be if they trust Him. He is the *True Vine;* no vine ever did so fully for its branches what He will do for us. We have only to consent to be branches. Honour Him by a joyful trust that He is, beyond all conception, the *True Vine,* holding you by His almighty strength, supplying you from His infinite fulness. And as your faith thus looks to Him, instead of sighing and failure, the voice of praise will be heard repeating the language of faith: Thanks be to God! he that abideth in Him does walk even as He walked. Thanks be to God! I abide in Him, and I walk as He walked. Yes, thanks be to God! in the blessed life of God's redeemed these two are inseparably one: abiding in Christ and walking like Christ.

Blessed Saviour! Thou knowest how often I have said to Thee, Lord, I do abide in Thee! And yet I sometimes feel that the full joy and power of life in Thee is wanting. Thy word this day has reminded me of what may be the reason of failure. I sought to abide in Thee more for my own comfort and growth than Thy glory. I did not apprehend fully how the hidden union with Thee had for its object perfect conformity to Thee, and how only he who wholly yields himself to serve and obey the Father as completely as Thou didst, can fully receive all that the heavenly love can do for him. I now see something of it: the entire surrender to live and work like Thee must

precede the full experience of the wondrous power of Thy life.

Lord, I thank Thee for the discovery. With my whole heart I would accept Thy calling, and yield myself in everything to walk *even as* Thou didst walk. To be Thy faithful follower in all Thou wert and didst on earth, be the one desire of my heart.

Blessed Lord! he that truly yields himself to walk as Thou didst walk, will receive grace wholly to abide in Thee. O my Lord! here I am. *To walk like Christ!* for this I do indeed consecrate myself to Thee. *To abide in Christ!* for this I trust in Thee with full assurance of faith. Perfect in me Thine own work.

And let Thy Holy Spirit help me, O my Lord! each time I meditate on what it is to walk like Thee, to hold fast the blessed truth: as one who abides *in Christ*, I have the strength to walk *like Christ*. Amen.

SECOND DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

He Himself calls us to it.

I have given you an example, that *ye also* should do *even as* I have done to you.—JOHN xiii. 15.

IT is Jesus Christ, the beloved Redeemer of our souls, who speaks thus. He had just, humbling Himself to do the work of the slave, washed His disciples' feet. In doing so His love had rendered to the body the service of which it stood in need at the supper table. At the same time He had shown, in a striking symbol, what He had done for their souls in cleansing them from sin. In this twofold work of love He had thus set before them, just before parting, in one significant act, the whole work of His life as a ministry of blessing to body and to soul. And as He sits down He says: '*I have given you an example, that* YE ALSO *should do*, EVEN AS I *have done to you.*' All that they had seen in Him, and experienced from Him, is thus made the rule of their life: 'EVEN AS I have done, do YE ALSO.'

The word of the blessed Saviour is for us too. To each one who knows that the Lord has washed

away his sin the command comes with all the touching force of one of the last words of Him who is going out to die for us: 'EVEN AS I have done to you, SO DO YE ALSO.' Jesus Christ does indeed ask every one of us in everything to act just as we have seen Him do. What He has done to ourselves, and still does each day, we are to do over again to others. In His condescending, pardoning, saving love, He is our example; each of us is to be the copy and image of the Master.

The thought comes at once: Alas! how little have I lived thus; how little have I even known that I was expected thus to live! And yet, He is my lord; He loves me, and I love Him; I dare not entertain the thought of living otherwise than He would have me. What can I do but open my heart to His word, and fix my gaze on His example, until it exercises its divine power upon me, and draws me with irresistible force to cry: Lord, even as Thou hast done, so will I do also.

The power of an example depends chiefly on two things. The one is the attractiveness of what it gives us to see, the other the personal relation and influence of him in whom it is seen. In both aspects, what power there is in our Lord's example!

Or, is there really anything very attractive in our Lord's example? I ask it in all earnest, because, to judge by the conduct of many of His disciples, it would really seem as if it were not so. O that the Spirit of God would open our eyes to

see the heavenly beauty of the likeness of the only-begotten Son!

We know who the Lord Jesus is. He is the Son of the all-glorious God, one with the Father in nature and glory and perfection. When He had been on earth it could be said of Him, 'We show you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.' In Him we see God. In Him we see how God would act were He here in our place on earth. In Him all that is beautiful and lovely and perfect in the heavenly world is revealed to us in the form of an earthly life. If we want to see what is really counted noble and glorious in the heavenly world, if we would see what is really Divine, we have only to look at Jesus; in all He does the glory of God is shown forth.

But oh, the blindness of God's children: this heavenly beauty has to many of them no attraction; there is no form or comeliness that they should desire it.

The manners and the way of living in the court of an earthly king exercise influence throughout the empire. The example it gives is imitated by all who belong to the nobility or the higher classes. But the example of the King of heaven, who came and dwelt in the flesh, that we might see how we might here on earth live a God-like life, alas! with how few of His followers does it really find imitation. When we look upon Jesus, His obedience to the will of the Father, His humilia-

tion to be a servant of the most unworthy, His love as manifested in the entire giving up and sacrifice of Himself, we see the most wondrous and glorious thing heaven has to show; in heaven itself we shall see nothing greater or brighter. Surely such an example, given of God on very purpose to make the imitation attractive and possible, ought to win us. Is it not enough to stir all that is within us with a holy jealousy and with joy unutterable as we hear the message, 'I have given you an example, that even as I have done, ye should also do'?

This is not all. The power of an example consists not only in its own intrinsic excellence, but also in the personal relation to him who gives it. Jesus had not washed the feet of others in presence of His disciples; it was when He had washed *their feet* that He said: 'Even as I have done *to you*, ye should also do.' It is the consciousness of a personal relationship to Christ that enforces the command: Do as I have done. It is the experience of what Jesus has done to me that is the strength in which I can go and do the same to others. He does not ask that I shall do more than has been done to me. But not less either: EVEN AS I have done to you. He does not ask that I shall humble myself as servant deeper than He has done. It would not have been strange if He had asked this of such a worm. But this is not His wish: He only demands that I shall just do and be what He, the King, has done and been. He

humbled Himself as low as humiliation could go, to love and to bless me. He counted this *His highest honour and blessedness.* And now He invites me to partake of the same honour and blessedness, in loving and serving as He did. Truly, if I indeed know the love that rests on me, and the humiliation through which alone that love could reach me, and the power of the cleansing which has washed me, nothing can keep me back from saying: 'Yes, blessed Lord, even as Thou hast done to me, I will also do.' The heavenly loveliness of the great Example, and the Divine lovingness of the great Exemplar, combine to make the example above everything attractive.

Only there is one thing I must not forget. It is not the remembrance of what Jesus has once done to me, but the living experience of what He is now to me, that will give me the power to act like Him. His love must be a present reality, the inflowing of a life and a power in which I can love like Him. It is only as by the Holy Spirit I realize WHAT Jesus is doing for me, and HOW He does it, and that it is HE who does it, that it is possible for me to do to others what He is doing to me.

'EVEN AS I have done to you, do YE ALSO!' What a precious word! What a glorious prospect! Jesus is going to show forth in me the Divine power of His love, that I may show it forth to others. He blesses me, that I may bless others. He loves me that I may love others. He becomes servant to me that I may become a servant to

others. He saves and cleanses me that I may save and cleanse others. He gives Himself wholly for and to me, that I may wholly give myself for and to others. I have only to be doing over to others what He is doing to me—nothing more. I can do it, just because He is doing it to me. What I do is nothing but the repeating, the showing forth of what I am receiving from Him.[1]

Wondrous grace! which thus calls us to be like our Lord in that which constitutes His highest glory. Wondrous grace! which fits us for this calling by Himself first being to us and in us what we are to be to others. Shall not our whole heart joyously respond to His command? Yes, blessed Lord! even as Thou doest to me will I also do to others.

Gracious Lord! what can I now do but praise and pray? My heart feels overwhelmed with this wondrous offer, that Thou wilt reveal all Thy love and power in me, if I will yield myself to let it flow through me to others. Though with fear and trembling, yet in deep and grateful adoration, with joy and confidence, I would accept the offer and say: Here I am; show me how much Thou lovest me, and I will show it to others by loving them even so.

[1] How beautifully the principle is expressed in the words of Moses to Hobab (Num. x. 32), 'And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, if thou go with us, that *what goodness the Lord shall do unto us, the same will we do* unto thee'!

And that I may be able to do this, blessed Lord, grant me these two things. Grant me, by Thy Holy Spirit, a clear insight into Thy love to me, that I may know how Thou lovest me, how Thy love to me is Thy delight and blessedness, how in that love Thou givest Thyself so completely to me, that Thou art indeed mine to do for me all I need. Grant this, Lord, and I shall know how to love and how to live for others, even as Thou lovest and livest for me.

And then grant me to see, as often as I feel how little love I have, that it is not with the love of my little heart, but with Thy love shed abroad in me, that I have to fulfil the command of loving like Thee. Am I not Thy branch, O my heavenly Vine? it is the fulness of Thy life and love that flows through me in love and blessing to those around. It is Thy Spirit that, at the same moment, reveals what Thou art to me, and strengthens me for what I am to be to others in Thy name. In this faith I dare to say, Amen, Lord, even as Thou doest to me, I also do. Yea, Amen.

THIRD DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

As one that serveth.

'If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, *ye also* ought to wash one another's feet.'—JOHN xiii. 14.

'I am among you as he that serveth.'—LUKE xxii. 27.

YESTERDAY we thought of the right that the Lord has to demand and expect that His redeemed ones should follow His example. To-day we will more specially consider in what it is we have to follow Him.

'Ye also ought to wash one another's feet,' is the word of which we want to understand the full meaning. The form of a *servant* in which we see Him, the *cleansing* which was the object of that service, the *love* which was its motive power,—these are the three chief thoughts.

First, the form of a servant. All was ready for the last supper, to the very water to wash the feet of the guests, according to custom. But there was no slave to do the work. Each one waits for the other: none of the twelve thinks of humbling himself to do the work. Even at the table they were full of the thought, who should be greatest in the

kingdom they were expecting (Luke xxii. 26, 27). All at once Jesus rises (they were still reclining at the table), lays aside His garments, girds Himself with a towel, and begins to wash their feet. O wondrous spectacle! on which angels gazed with adoring wonder. Christ, the Creator and King of the universe, at whose beck legions of angels are ready to serve Him, who might with one word of love have said which one of the twelve must do the work,—Christ chooses the slave's place for His own, takes the soiled feet in His own holy hands, and washes them. He does it in full consciousness of His divine glory, for John says, 'Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God, rose.' For the hands into which God had given all things, nothing is common or unclean. The meanness of a work never lowers the person; the person honours and elevates the work, and imparts his own worth even to the meanest service. In such deep humiliation, as we men call it, our Lord finds divine glory, and is in this the Leader of His Church in the path of true blessedness. It is as the Son that He is the servant. Just because He is the beloved of His Father, in whose hands all things are given, it is not difficult for Him to stoop so low. In thus taking the form of a servant, Jesus proclaims the law of rank in the Church of Christ. The higher one wishes to stand in grace, the more it must be his joy to be servant of all. 'Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant

(Matt. xx. 27); 'He that is greatest among you shall be your servant' (Matt. xxiii. 11). The higher I rise in the consciousness of being like Christ, God's beloved child, the deeper shall I stoop to serve all around me.

A servant is one who is always caring for the work and interest of his master, is ever ready to let his master see that he only seeks to do what will please or profit him. Thus Jesus lived: 'For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many' (Mark x. 45); 'I am among you as he that serveth.' Thus I must live, moving about among God's children as the servant of all. If I seek to bless others, it must be in the humble, loving readiness with which I serve them, not caring for my own honour or interest, if I can but be a blessing to them. I must follow Christ's example in washing the disciples' feet. A servant counts it no humiliation, and is not ashamed of being counted an inferior: it is his place and work to serve others. The reason why we so often do not bless others is that we wish to address them as their superiors in grace or gifts, or at least their equals. If we first learnt from our Lord to associate with others in the blessed spirit of a servant, what a blessing we should become to the world! When once this example is admitted to the place it ought to have in the Church of Christ, the power of His presence would soon make itself felt.

And what is now the work the disciple has to

perform in this spirit of lowly service? The foot-washing speaks of a double work—the one, for the cleansing and refreshing of the body; the other, the cleansing and saving of the soul. During the whole of our Lord's life upon earth these two things were ever united: 'The sick were healed, to the poor the gospel was preached.' As with the paralytic, so with many others, blessing to the body was the type and promise of life to the spirit.

The follower of Jesus may not lose sight of this when he receives the command, 'Ye ought also to wash one another's feet.' Remembering that the external and bodily is the gate to the inner and spiritual life, he makes the salvation of the soul the first object in his holy ministry of love, at the same time, however, seeking the way to the hearts by the ready service of love in the little and common things of daily life. It is not by reproof and censure that he shows that he is a servant; no, but by the friendliness and kindliness with which he proves in daily intercourse that he always thinks how he can help or serve, he becomes the living witness of what it is to be a follower of Jesus. From such a one the word when spoken comes with power, and finds easy entrance. And then, when he comes into contact with the sin and perverseness and contradiction of men, instead of being discouraged, he perseveres as he thinks with how much patience Jesus has borne with him, and still daily cleanses him; he realizes himself to be one of God's appointed servants, to stoop to the lowest

depth to serve and save men, even to bow at the feet of others if this be needed.

The spirit which will enable one to live such a life of loving service, can be learned from Jesus alone. John writes, 'Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end' (John xiii. 1). For love nothing is too hard. Love never speaks of sacrifice. To bless the loved one, however unworthy, it willingly gives up all. It was love made Jesus a servant. It is love alone will make the servant's place and work such blessedness to us, that we shall persevere in it at all costs. We may perhaps, like Jesus, have to wash the feet of some Judas who rewards us with ingratitude and betrayal. We shall probably meet many a Peter, who first, with his 'Never my feet' refuses, and then is dissatisfied when we do not comply with his impatient 'Not only the feet, but also the head and the hands.' Only love, a heavenly unquenchable love, gives the patience, the courage, and the wisdom for this great work the Lord has set before us in His holy example: 'Wash ye one another's feet.'

Try above all to understand that it is only as a son you can be truly a servant. It was as the Son Christ took the form of a servant: in this you will find the secret of willing, happy service. Walk among men *as a Son of the Most High God.* A Son of God is only in the world to show forth His Father's glory, to prove how God-like and how blessed it is to live only and at any cost to find a way for love to the hearts of the lost.

O my soul, thy love cannot attain to this; therefore listen to Him who says, '*Abide in my love.*' Our one desire must be that He may show us how He loves us, and that He Himself may keep us abiding in '*His love.*' Live every day, as the beloved of the Lord, in the experience that His love washes and cleanses, bears and blesses you all the day long. This love of His flowing into you, will flow out again from you, and make it your greatest joy to follow His example in washing the feet of others. Do not complain much of the want of love and humility in others, but pray much that the Lord would awaken His people to their calling, truly so to follow in His footsteps that the world may see that they have taken Him for their example. And if you do not see it as soon as you wish in those around you, let it only urge you to more earnest prayer, that in you at least the Lord may have one who understands and proves that to love and serve like Jesus is the highest blessedness and joy, as well as the way, like Jesus, to be a blessing and a joy to others.

My Lord, I give myself to Thee, to live this blessed life of service. In Thee I have seen it, the spirit of a servant is a kingly spirit, come from heaven and lifting up to heaven, yea, the Spirit of God's own Son. Thou everlasting Love, dwell in me, and my life shall be like Thine, and the language of my life to others as Thine, 'I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.'

O Thou glorified Son of God, Thou knowest how little of Thy Spirit dwells in us, how this life of a servant is opposed to all that the world reckons honourable or proper. But Thou hast come to teach us new lessons of what is right, to show us what is thought in heaven of the glory of being the least, of the blessedness of serving. O Thou, who dost not only give new thoughts but implant new feelings, give me a heart like Thine, a heart full of the Holy Spirit, a heart that can love as Thou dost. O Lord, Thy Holy Spirit dwells within me; Thy fulness is my inheritance; in the joy of the Holy Spirit I can be as Thou art. I do yield myself to a life of service like Thine. Let the same mind be in me which was also in Thee, when Thou didst make Thyself of no reputation, and didst take upon Thee the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, didst humble Thyself. Yea, Lord, that very same mind be in me too by Thy grace. As a son of God let me be the servant of men. Amen.

FOURTH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

Our Head.

'For even hereunto were ye called; because *Christ also* suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.—1 PET. ii. 21.

THE call to follow Christ's example, and to walk in His footsteps, is so high that there is every reason to ask with wonder, How can it be expected of sinful men that they should walk like the Son of God? The answer that most people give is practically, that it cannot really be expected: the command sets before us an ideal, beautiful but unattainable.[1]

The answer Scripture gives is different. It points us to the wonderful relationship in which we stand to Christ. Because our union to Him sets in operation within us a heavenly life with all its powers, therefore the claim may be made in downright earnest that we should live as Christ did. The realization of this relationship between Christ and

[1] See note.

His people is necessary for every one who is in earnest in following Christ's example.

And what is now this relationship? It is threefold. Peter speaks in this passage of Christ as our *Surety*, our *Example*, and our *Head*.

Christ is our *Surety*. 'Christ suffered *for us*,'—'Who His own self *bare our sins* in His own body on the tree.' As Surety, Christ suffered and died in our *stead*. He bore our sin, and broke at once its curse and power. As Surety, He did what we could not do, what we now need not do.

Christ is also our *Example* too. In one sense His work is unique; in another we have to follow Him in it; we must do as He did, live and suffer like Him. 'Christ *suffered for us, leaving us an Example*' that we should follow in His footsteps. His suffering as my Surety calls me to a suffering like His as my Example. But is this reasonable? In His suffering as Surety He had the power of the Divine nature, and how can I be expected in the weakness of the flesh to suffer as He did? Is there not an impassable gulf between these two things which Peter unites so closely, the suffering as Surety and the suffering as Example? No, there is a blessed third aspect of Christ's work, which bridges that gulf, which is the connecting link between Christ as Surety and Christ as Example, which makes it possible for us in very deed to take the Surety as Example, and live and suffer and die like Him.

Christ is also our *Head*. In this His Suretyship

and His Example have their root and unity. Christ is the second Adam. As a believer I am spiritually one with Him. In this union He lives in me, and imparts to me the power of His finished work, the power of His sufferings and death and resurrection. It is on this ground we are taught in Romans vi. and elsewhere that the Christian is indeed dead to sin and alive to God. The very life that Christ lives, the life that passed through death, and the power of that death, work in the believer, so that he is dead, and has risen again with Christ. It is this thought Peter gives utterance to when he says: 'Who His own self bore our sins upon the tree,' not alone that we through His death might receive forgiveness, but 'that we, being *dead to sins, should live* unto righteousness.' As we have part in the spiritual death of the first Adam, having really died to God in him, so we have part in the second Adam, having really died to sin in Him, and in Him being made alive again to God. Christ is not only our Surety who lived and died for us, our Example who showed us how to live and die, but also our Head, with whom we are one, in whose death we have died, with whose life we now live. This gives us the power to follow our Surety as our Example: Christ being our Head is the bond that makes the believing on the Surety and the following of the Example inseparably one.

These three are one. The three truths may not be separated from each other. And yet this happens but too often. There are some who wish

to follow Christ's Example without faith in His atonement. They seek within themselves the power to live like Him: their efforts must be vain. There are others who hold fast to the Suretyship but neglect the Example. They believe in redemption through the blood of the cross, but neglect the footsteps of Him who bore it. Faith in the atonement is indeed the foundation of the building, but it is not all. Theirs too is a deficient Christianity, with no true view of sanctification, because they do not see how, along with faith on Christ's atonement, following His Example is indispensably necessary.

There are still others who have received these two truths,—Christ as Surety and Christ as Example,—and yet want something. They feel constrained to follow Christ as Example in what He did as Surety, but want the power. They do not rightly understand how this following His Example can really be attained. What they need is, the clear insight as to what Scripture teaches of Christ as Head. Because the Surety is not some one outside of me, but One in whom I am, and who is in me, therefore it is that I can become like Him. His very life lives in me. He lives Himself in me, whom He bought with His blood. To follow His footsteps is a duty, because it is a possibility, the natural result of the wonderful union between Head and members. It is only when this is understood aright that the blessed truth of Christ's Example will take its right place. If Jesus Himself through His life union

will work in me the life likeness, then my duty becomes plain, but glorious. I have, on the one side, to gaze on His Example so as to know and follow it. On the other, to abide in Him, and open my heart to the blessed workings of His life in me. As surely as He conquered sin and its curse *for me*, will He conquer it in its power *in me*. What He began by His death for me, He will perfect by His life in me. Because my Surety is also my Head, His Example must and will be the rule of my life.

There is a saying of Augustine that is often quoted: 'Lord! give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt.' This holds good here. If the Lord, who lives in me, *gives* what He requires of me, then no requirement can be too high. Then I have the courage to gaze upon His holy Example in all its height and breadth, and to accept of it as the law of my conduct. It is no longer merely a command telling what I must be, but a promise of what I shall be. There is nothing that weakens the power of Christ's Example so much as the thought that we cannot really walk like Him. Do not listen to such thoughts. The perfect likeness in heaven is begun on earth, can grow with each day, and become more visible as life goes on. As certain and mighty as the work of surety which Christ, your Head, completed once for all, is the renewal after His own Image, which He is still working out. Let this double blessing make the cross doubly precious: Our Head suffered as a Surety, that in union with us He might bear sin for

us. Our Head suffered as an Example, that He might show us what the path is in which, in union with Himself, He would lead us to victory and to glory. The suffering Christ is our Head, our Surety, and our Example.

And so the great lesson I have to learn is the wonderful truth that it is just in that mysterious path of suffering, in which He wrought out our atonement and redemption, that we are to follow His footsteps, and that the full experience of that redemption depends upon the personal fellowship in that suffering. 'Christ suffered *for us*, leaving us an Example.' May the Holy Spirit reveal to me what this means.

Precious Saviour! how shall I thank Thee for the work that Thou hast done as Surety? Standing in the place of me a guilty sinner, Thou hast borne my sins in Thy body on the cross. That cross was my due. Thou didst take it, and wast made like unto me, that thus the cross might be changed into a place of blessing and life.

And now Thou callest me to the place of crucifixion as the place of blessing and life, where I may be made like Thee, and may find in Thee power to suffer and to cease from sin. As my Head, Thou wert my Surety to suffer and die with me; as my Head, Thou art my Example that I might suffer and die with Thee.

Precious Saviour! I confess that I have too little understood this. Thy Suretyship was more to me

than Thy Example. I rejoiced much that Thou hadst borne the cross for me, but too little that I like Thee and with Thee might also bear the cross. The atonement of the cross was more precious to me than the fellowship of the cross; the hope in Thy redemption more precious than the personal fellowship with Thyself.

Forgive me this, dear Lord, and teach me to find my happiness in union with Thee, my Head, not more in Thy Suretyship than in thine Example And grant, that in my meditations as to how I am to follow Thee, my faith may become stronger and brighter: Jesus is my Example because He is my life. I must and can be like Him, because I am one with Him. Grant this, my blessed Lord, for Thy love's sake. Amen.

NOTE.

'Thomas à Kempis has said, "All men wish to be with Christ, and to belong to His people; but few are really willing to follow the life of Christ." There are many who imagine that to imitate Jesus Christ is a specially advanced state in the Christian life, to which only a few elect can attain; they think that one can be a real Christian if he only confesses his weakness and sin, and holds fast to the Word and Sacrament, *without attaining any real conformity to the life of Christ;* they even count it pride and fanaticism if one venture to say *that conformity to the likeness of Jesus Christ is an indispensable sign of the true Christian.* And yet our Lord says to all without exception: "He that doth not take his cross,

and follow after me, is not worthy of me;" He mentions expressly the most difficult thing in His life—the cross, that which includes all else. And Peter writes not to some, but to the whole Church: Christ hath left us an Example that ye should follow His footsteps. It is a sad sign that these unmistakeable commands have been so darkened in our modern Christianity, that our leading ministers and church members have quietly, as by common consent, agreed to rob these words of their sting. A false dogmatic must bear no small share of the blame. To defend the Divinity of our Saviour against unbelief, men have presented and defended His Divine nature with such exclusiveness, that it became impossible to form any real living conception of His humanity. It is not enough that we admit that Christ was a true man; no one can form any true idea of this humanity who is ever afraid to lose the true Christ, if he does not every moment ascribe to Him Divine power and omniscience. For, of a truth, if Christ's suffering and cross be only and altogether something supernatural, we must cease to speak of the imitation of Christ in any true or real sense of the word. Oh, the gulf of separation which comes between the life of Christ and the life of Christians, when the relation between them is only an external one! And how slow and slothful the Church of our days is to apply the great and distinct rule so clearly laid down in the life of Christ, to the filling of these gulfs and the correcting of the disorders of our modern life. The Church of Christ will not be brought again out of its confusions until *the faithful actual imitation of her Lord and Head again becomes the banner round which she rallies His disciples.*'[1]

[1] From M. Diemer, *Een nieuw boek over de navolging van Jesus Christus* (A new book on the imitation of Jesus Christ).

Fifth Day.

LIKE CHRIST:

In suffering Wrong.

'For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.'—1 Pet. ii. 19, 20.

IT is in connection with a very everyday matter that Peter gave utterance to those weighty words concerning Christ as our Surety and Example. He is writing to servants, who at that time were mostly slaves. He teaches them 'to be subject with all fear,' not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For, so he writes, if any one do wrong and be punished for it, to bear it patiently is no special grace. No; but if one do well, and suffer for it, and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; such bearing of wrong is Christ-like. In bearing our sins as Surety, Christ suffered wrong from man; after His example we must be ready to suffer wrongfully too.

There is almost nothing harder to bear than injustice from our fellow-men. It is not only the

loss of pain; there is the feeling of humiliation and injustice, and the consciousness of our rights asserts itself. In what our fellow-creatures do to us, it is not easy at once to recognise the will of God, who thus allows us to be tried, to see if we have truly taken Christ as our example. Let us study that example. From Him we may learn what it was that gave Him the power to bear injuries patiently.

Christ believed in suffering as the will of God. He had found it in Scripture that the servant of God should suffer. He had made Himself familiar with the thought, so that when suffering came, it did not take Him by surprise. He expected it. He knew that thus He must be perfected; and so His first thought was not how to be delivered from it, but how to glorify God in it. This enabled Him to bear the greatest injustice quietly. He saw God's hand in it.

Christian! would you have strength to suffer wrong in the spirit in which Christ did? Accustom yourself in everything that happens, to recognise the hand and will of God. This lesson is of more consequence than you think. Whether it be some great wrong that is done you, or some little offence that you meet in daily life, before you fix your thoughts on the person who did it, first be still, and remember, *God allows me to come into this trouble to see if I shall glorify Him in it.* This trial, be it the greatest or least, is allowed by God, and is His will concerning me. Let me first recognise and

submit to *God's will* in it. Then in the rest of soul which this gives, I shall receive wisdom to know how to behave in it. With my eye turned from man to God, suffering wrong is not so hard as it seems.

Christ also believed that God would care for His rights and honour. There is an innate sense of right within us that comes from God. But he who lives in the visible, wants his honour to be vindicated at once here below. He who lives in the eternal, and as seeing the Invisible, is satisfied to leave the vindication of his rights and honour in God's hands; he knows that they are safe with Him. It was thus with the Lord Jesus. Peter writes, 'He committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.' It was a settled thing between the Father and the Son, that the Son was not to care for His own honour, but only for the Father's. The Father would care for the Son's honour. Let the Christian just follow Christ's example in this, it will give him such rest and peace. Give your right and your honour into God's keeping. Meet every offence that man commits against you with the firm trust that God will watch over and care for you. Commit it to Him who judgeth righteously.

Further, *Christ believed in the power of suffering love.* We all admit that there is no power like that of love. Through it Christ overcomes the enmity of the world. Every other victory gives only a forced submission; love alone gives the true victory over an enemy, by converting him into a friend. We

all acknowledge the truth of this as a principle, but we shrink from the application. Christ believed it, and acted accordingly. He said too, I shall have my revenge; but His revenge was that of love, bringing enemies as friends to His feet. He believed that by silence and submission, and suffering and bearing wrong, He would win the cause, because thus love would have its triumph.

And this is what He desires of us too. In our sinful nature there is more faith in might and right than in the heavenly power of love. But he who would be like Christ must follow Him in this also, that He seeks to conquer evil with good. *The more another does him wrong, the more he feels called to love him.* Even if it be needful for the public welfare that justice should punish the offender, he takes care that there be in it nothing of personal feeling; as far as he is concerned, he forgives and loves.

Ah, what a difference it would make in Christendom and in our churches, if Christ's example were followed! If each one who was reviled, 'reviled not again;' if each one who suffered, 'threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.' Fellow-Christians, this is literally what the Father would have us do. Let us read and read again the words of Peter, until our soul be filled with the thought, 'If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, *this is acceptable with God.*' [1]

[1] See note.

In ordinary Christian life, where we mostly seek to fulfil our calling as redeemed ones in our own strength, such a conformity to the Lord's image is an impossibility. But in a life of full surrender, where we have given all into His hands, in the faith that He will work all in us, there the glorious expectation is awakened, that the imitation of Christ in this is indeed within our reach. For the command to suffer like Christ has come in connection with the teaching, 'Christ also suffered for us, so that we, being dead to sins, might live unto righteousness.'

Beloved fellow-Christian! wouldst thou not love to be like Jesus, and in bearing injuries act as He Himself would have acted in thy place? Is it not a glorious prospect in everything, even in this too, to be conformed to Him? For our strength it is too high; in His strength it is possible. Only surrender thyself day by day to Him to be in all things just what He would have thee to be. Believe that He lives in heaven to be the life and the strength of each one who seeks to walk in His footsteps. Yield thyself to be one with the suffering, crucified Christ, that thou mayest understand what it is to be dead to sins, and to live unto righteousness. And it will be thy joyful experience what wonderful power there is in Jesus' death, not only to atone for sin, but to break its power; and in His resurrection, to make thee live unto righteousness. Thou shalt find it *equally blessed to follow fully the footsteps of the suffering Saviour*, as it has been to trust fully and only in that suffering

for atonement and redemption. Christ will be as precious as thy Example as He has ever been as thy Surety. Because He took thy sufferings upon Himself, thou wilt lovingly take His sufferings upon thyself. And bearing wrong will become a glorious part of the fellowship with His holy sufferings; a glorious mark of being conformed to His most holy likeness; a most blessed fruit of the true life of faith.

O Lord my God, I have heard Thy precious word: If any man endure grief, suffering wrongfully, and take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. This is indeed a sacrifice that is well-pleasing to Thee, a work that Thine own grace alone hath wrought, a fruit of the suffering of Thy beloved Son, of the example He left, and the power He gives in virtue of His having destroyed the power of sin.

O my Father, teach me and all Thy children to aim at nothing less than complete conformity to Thy dear Son in this trait of His blessed image. Lord my God, I would now, once for all, give up the keeping of my honour and my rights into Thy hands, never more again myself to take charge of them. Thou wilt care for them most perfectly. May my only care be the honour and the rights of my Lord!

I specially beseech Thee to fill me with faith in the conquering power of suffering love. Give me to apprehend fully how the suffering Lamb of God teaches us that patience and silence and suffering avail more with God, and therefore with man too,

than might or right. O my Father, I must, I would walk in the footsteps of my Lord Jesus. Let Thy Holy Spirit, and the light of Thy love and presence, be my guide and strength. Amen.

NOTE.

'What is it thou sayest, my son? Cease from complaining, when thou considerest my passion, and the sufferings of my other saints. Do not say, "To suffer this from such a one, it is more than I can or may do. He has done me great wrong, and accused me of things I never thought of. Of another I might bear it, if I thought I deserved it, but not from him!" Such thoughts are very foolish; instead of thinking of patience in suffering, or of Him by whom it will be crowned, we only are occupied with the injury done to us, and the person who has done it. No, he deserves not the name of patient *who is only willing to suffer as much as he thinks proper, and from whom he pleases.* The truly patient man asks not from whom he suffers, his superior, his equal, or his inferior; whether from a good and holy man, or one who is perverse and unworthy. But from whomsoever, how much soever, or how often soever wrong is done him, he accepts it all as from the hand of God, and counts it gain. For with God it is impossible that anything suffered for His sake should pass without its reward.

'O Lord, let that become possible to me by Thy grace, which by nature seems impossible. Grant that the suffering wrong may by Thy love be made pleasant to me. To suffer for Thy sake is most healthful to my soul.'[1]

[1] From Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, iii. 19, *That the suffering of wrong is the proof of true patience.*

SIXTH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

Crucified with Him.

'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.'—GAL. ii. 20, vi. 14.

TAKING up the cross was always spoken of by Christ as the test of discipleship. On three different occasions (Matt. x. 38, xvi. 24; Luke xiv. 27) we find the words repeated, 'If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me.' While the Lord was still on His way to the cross, this expression—taking up the cross—was the most appropriate to indicate that conformity to Him to which the disciple is called.[1] But now that He has been crucified, the Holy Spirit gives another expression, in which our entire conformity to Christ

[1] See note. Christians entirely miss the point of the Lord's command when they refer the taking up of the cross only to the crosses or trials of life. It means much more. The cross means death. Taking up the cross means going out to die. It is just in the time of prosperity that we most need to bear the cross. Taking up the cross and following Him is nothing less than living every day with our own life and will given up to death.

is still more powerfully set forth,—the believing disciple is himself crucified with Christ. The cross is the chief mark of the Christian as of Christ; the crucified Christ and the crucified Christian belong to each other. One of the chief elements of likeness to Christ consists in being crucified with Him. Whoever wishes to be like Him must seek to understand the secret of fellowship with His cross.

At first sight the Christian who seeks conformity to Jesus is afraid of this truth; he shrinks from the painful suffering and death with which the thought of the cross is connected. As His spiritual discernment becomes clearer, however, this word becomes all his hope and joy, and he glories in the cross, because it makes him a partner in a death and victory that has already been accomplished, and in which the deliverance from the powers of the flesh and of the world has been secured to him. To understand this we must notice carefully the language of Scripture.

'I am crucified with Christ,' Paul says; 'nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' Through faith in Christ we become partakers of Christ's life. That life is a life that has passed through the death of the cross, and *in which the power of that death is always working.* When I receive that life, I receive at the same time the full power of the death on the cross working in me in its never-ceasing energy. 'I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me' (R. V.); the

life I now live is not my own life, but the life of the Crucified One, is the life of the cross. The being crucified is a thing past and done: 'Knowing this, that our old man *was* (R. V.) crucified with Him;' 'They that are Christ's *have* crucified the flesh;' 'I glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world *hath been* (R. V.) crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' These texts all speak of something that has been done in Christ, and into which I am admitted by faith.

It is of great consequence to understand this, and to give bold utterance to the truth: I have been crucified with Christ; I have crucified the flesh. I thus learn how perfectly I share in the finished work of Christ. If I am crucified and dead with Him, then I am a partner in His life and victory. I learn to understand the position I must take to allow the power of that cross and that death to manifest itself in mortifying or (R. V.) making dead the old man and the flesh, in destroying the body of sin (Rom. vi. 6).

For there is still a great work for me to do. But that work is not to crucify myself: I have been crucified; the old man was crucified, so the Scripture speaks. But what I have to do is always to regard and treat it as crucified, and not to suffer it to come down from the cross. I must maintain my crucifixion position; I must keep the flesh in the place of crucifixion. To realize the force of this I must notice an important distinction. I have been crucified and am dead: the old Adam

was crucified, but is not yet dead. When I gave myself to my crucified Saviour, sin and flesh and all, He took me wholly; I with my evil nature was taken up with Him in His crucifixion. But here a separation took place. In fellowship with Him I was freed from the life of the flesh; I myself died with Him; in the inmost centre of my being I received new life: Christ lives in *me*. But the flesh, in which I yet am, the old man that was crucified with Him, remained condemned to an accursed death, but is not yet dead. And now it is my calling, in fellowship with and in the strength of my Lord, to see that the old nature be kept nailed to the cross, until the time comes that it is entirely destroyed. All its desires and affections cry out, 'Come down from the cross, save thyself and us.' It is my duty to glory in the cross, and with my whole heart to maintain the dominion of the cross, and to set my seal to the sentence that has been pronounced, to make dead every uprising of sin, as already crucified, and so not to suffer it to have dominion. This is what Scripture means when it says, 'If ye through the spirit do make to die (R. V.) the deeds of the body, ye shall live' (Rom. viii. 13). 'Make dead therefore your members which are upon the earth.' Thus I continually and voluntarily acknowledge that in my flesh dwells no good thing; that my Lord is Christ the Crucified One; that I have been crucified and *am dead* in Him; that the flesh has been crucified and, though not yet dead, has been for ever given over

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to the death of the cross. And so I live like Christ, in very deed crucified with Him.

In order to enter fully into the meaning and the power of this fellowship of the crucifixion of our Lord, two things are specially necessary to those who are Christ's followers. The first is the clear consciousness of this their fellowship with the Crucified One through faith. At conversion they became partakers of it without fully understanding it. Many remain in ignorance all their life long through a want of spiritual knowledge. Brother, pray that the Holy Spirit may reveal to you your union to the Crucified One. 'I have been crucified with Christ;' 'I glory in the cross of Christ, through which I have been crucified to the world.' Take such words of Holy Scripture, and by prayer and meditation make them your own, with a heart that expects and asks the Holy Spirit to make them living and effectual within you. Look upon yourself in the light of God as what you really are, 'crucified with Christ.'

Then you will find the grace for the second thing you need to enable you to live as a crucified one, in whom Christ lives. You will be able always to look upon and to treat the flesh and the world as nailed to the cross. The old nature seeks continually to assert itself, and to make you feel as if it is expecting too much that you should always live this crucifixion life. Your only safety is in fellowship with Christ. 'Through Him and His cross,' says Paul, 'I have been crucified to the world.' In Him the crucifixion is an accomplished

reality; in Him you have died, but also have been made alive: Christ lives in you. With this fellowship of His cross let it be with you, the deeper the better: it brings you into deeper communion with His life and His love. To be crucified with Christ means freed from the power of sin: a redeemed one, a conqueror. Remember that the Holy Spirit has been specially provided to glorify Christ in you, to reveal within you, and make your very own all that is in Christ for you. Do not be satisfied, with so many others, only to know the cross in its power to atone: the glory of the cross is, that it was not only to Jesus, but is to us too, the path to life, but that each moment it can become to us the power that destroys sin and death, and keeps us in the power of the eternal life. Learn from your Saviour the holy art of using it for this. Faith in the power of the cross and its victory will day by day make dead the deeds of the body, the lusts of the flesh. This faith will teach you to count the cross, with its continual death to self, all your glory. Because you regard the cross, not as one who is still on the way to crucifixion, with the prospect of a painful death, but as one to whom the crucifixion is past, who already lives in Christ, and now only bears the cross as the blessed instrument through which the body of sin is done away (Rom. vi. 6, R. V.). The banner under which complete victory over sin and the world is to be won is the cross.

Above all, remember what still remains the chief thing. It is Jesus, the living loving Saviour, who

Himself enables you to be like Him in all things. His sweet fellowship, His tender love, His heavenly power, make it a blessedness and joy to be like Him, the Crucified One, make the crucifixion life a life of resurrection-joy and power. IN HIM the two are inseparably connected. In Him you have the strength to be always singing the triumphant song: God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Precious Saviour, I humbly ask Thee to show me the hidden glory of the fellowship of Thy cross. The cross was my place, the place of death and curse. Thou didst become like us, and hast been crucified with us. And now the cross is Thy place, the place of blessing and life. And Thou callest me to become like Thee, and as one who is crucified with Thee, to experience how entirely the cross has made me free from sin.

Lord, give me to know its full power. It is long since I knew the power of the cross to redeem from the curse. But how long I strove in vain as a redeemed one to overcome the power of sin, and to obey the Father as Thou hast done! I could not break the power of sin. But now I see, this comes only when Thy disciple yields himself entirely to be led by Thy Holy Spirit into the fellowship of Thy cross. There Thou dost give him to see how the cross *has broken for ever* the power of sin, and has made him free. There Thou, the Crucified One

dost live in him and impart to him Thine own Spirit of whole-hearted self-sacrifice, in casting out and conquering sin. Oh, my Lord, teach me to understand this better. In this faith I say, 'I have been crucified with Christ.' Oh, Thou who lovedst me to the death, not Thy cross, but Thyself the Crucified One, Thou art He whom I seek, and in whom I hope. Take me, Thou Crucified One, and hold me fast, and teach me from moment to moment to look upon all that is of self as condemned, and only worthy to be crucified. Take me, and hold me, and teach me, from moment to moment, that in Thee I have all I need for a life of holiness and blessing. Amen.

NOTE.

'Jesus hath now many lovers of His heavenly kingdom, but few bearers of His cross. He hath many who desire His consolation, few His tribulation; many who are willing to share His table, few His fasting. All are willing to rejoice with Him, few will endure anything for Him. Many follow Jesus into the breaking of bread, but few to drink of the cup whereof He drank. Many glory in His miracles, few in the shame of His cross.'[1]

'To many it seems a hard speech, "Deny thyself, take up thy cross, and follow Jesus." But it will be much harder to hear that other word, "Depart from me, ye cursed;" for only they who now hear and follow the word of the cross shall then have no fear of the word of condemnation. For the sign of the cross will be seen in the heaven when the Lord cometh to judgment, and all the servants of the cross, who in their lifetime have been conformed to Christ crucified, will then draw near to

[1] From Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, ii. 11. *That the lovers of the Cross of Jesus are few.*

Christ their judge with great confidence. Why, then, dost thou fear to take up the cross which fitteth thee for the kingdom? In the cross is life, in the cross is salvation; the cross defends against all enemies; in the cross there is the infusion of all heavenly sweetness; in the cross is strength of mind, joy of spirit; the cross is the height of virtue and the perfection of sanctity. There is no happiness for the soul but in the cross. Take up, therefore, thy cross and follow Jesus, and thou shalt live for ever.

'If thou bear the cross cheerfully, it will bear thee. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest for thyself a burden which still thou hast to bear. What saint was there ever who did not bear the cross? Even Christ must needs suffer. How then dost thou seek any other way than this, which is the royal way, the way of the sacred cross?

'He that willingly submits to the cross, to him its whole burden is changed into a sweet assurance of divine comfort. And the more the flesh is broken down by the cross, the more the spirit is strengthened by inward grace. It is not in man by nature to bear the cross, to love the cross, to deny self, to bring the body into subjection, and willingly to endure suffering. If thou look to thyself, thou canst accomplish nothing of all this. But if thou trust in the Lord, strength shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and the flesh shall be made subject to thy rule. Set thyself, therefore, to bear manfully the cross of thy Lord, who out of love was crucified for thee.

'Know for certain thou oughtest to lead a dying life, for the more any man dieth unto himself, the more he liveth unto God. Surely, if there had been any better thing, and more profitable to man's salvation, than bearing the cross, Christ would have showed it us by word and example. But now He calleth all who would follow Him plainly to do this one thing, daily to bear the cross.'[1]

[1] From Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, ii. 12. *Of the Royal Way of the Sacred Cross.*

Seventh Day.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Self-denial.

'We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For *even Christ* pleased not Himself, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me. Wherefore receive ye one another, *even as* Christ also received us to the glory of God.'—Rom. xv. 1–3, 7.

'If any man will come *after me,* let him *deny himself,* and take up his cross, and *follow me.*—Matt. xvi. 24.

EVEN *Christ pleased not Himself:* He bore the reproaches, with which men reproached and dishonoured God, so patiently, that He might glorify God and save man. Christ pleased not Himself: with reference both to God and man, this word is the key of His life. In this, too, His life is our rule and example; we who are strong ought not to please ourselves.

To deny self—this is the opposite of pleasing self. When Peter denied Christ, he said: I know not the man; with Him and His interests I have nothing to do; I do not wish to be counted His friend. In the same way the true Christian denies himself, the old man: I do not know this old man; I will have nothing to do with him and his interests. And when shame and dishonour come upon him, or anything be exacted that is not pleasant to the old nature, he simply says: Do as you like with the old

Adam, I will take no notice of it. Through the cross of Christ I am crucified to the world, and the flesh, and self; to the friendship and interest of this old man I am a stranger; I deny him to be my friend; I deny his every claim and wish; I know him not.

The Christian who only thinks of his salvation from curse and condemnation cannot understand this; he finds it impossible to deny self. Although he may sometimes try to do so, his life mainly consists in pleasing himself. The Christian who has taken Christ as his pattern cannot be content with this. He has surrendered himself to seek the most complete fellowship with the cross of Christ. The Holy Spirit has taught him to say, I have been crucified with Christ, and so am dead to sin and self. In fellowship with Christ he sees the old man crucified, a condemned malefactor; he is ashamed to own him as a friend: it is his fixed purpose, and he has received the power for it too, no longer to please his old nature, but to deny it. *Because the crucified Christ is his life, self-denial is the law of his life.*

This self-denial extends itself over the whole domain of life. It was so with the Lord Jesus, and is so with every one who longs to follow Him perfectly. This self-denial has not so much to do with what is sinful, and unlawful, and contrary to the laws of God, as with what is lawful, or apparently indifferent. To the self-denying spirit the will and glory of God and the salvation of man are always more than our own interests or pleasure.

Before we can know how to please our neighbour, self-denial must first exercise itself in our own

personal life. It must rule the body. The holy fasting of Him who said, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; and who would not eat until His Father gave Him food, and His Father's work was done, teaches the believer a holy temperance in eating and drinking. The holy poverty of Him who had not where to lay His head, teaches him so to regulate the possession, and use, and enjoyment of earthly things, that he may always possess as not possessing. After the example of the holy suffering of Him who bore all our sins in His own body on the tree, he learns to bear all suffering patiently: even in the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, he desires to bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus; with Paul he keeps under the body and brings it into subjection; all its desires and appetites he would have ruled by the self-denial of Jesus. He does not please himself.

This self-denial keeps watch over the spirit too. His own wisdom and judgment the believer brings into subjection to God's word; he gives up his own thoughts to the teaching of the Word and the Spirit. Towards man he manifests the same self-denial of his own wisdom in a readiness to hear and learn, in the meekness and humility with which, even when he knows he is in the right, he gives his opinion, in the desire ever to find and to acknowledge what is good in others.

And then self-denial has special reference to the heart. All the affections and desires are placed under it. The will, the kingly power of the soul, is speci-

ally under its control. As little as self-pleasing could be a part of Christ's life, may Christ's follower allow it ever to influence his conduct. 'We ought not to please ourselves. For even Christ pleased not Himself.' Self-denial is the law of his life.

Nor does he find it hard when once he has truly surrendered himself to it. To one who, with a divided heart, seeks to force himself to a life of self-denial, it is hard indeed; but to one who has yielded himself to it unreservedly, because he has with his whole heart accepted the cross to destroy the power of sin and self, the blessing it brings more than compensates for apparent sacrifice or loss. He hardly dare any longer speak of self-denial, there is such blessedness in becoming conformed to the image of Jesus.

Self-denial has not its value with God, as some think, from the measure of pain it causes. No, for this pain is very much caused by the remaining reluctance to practise it. But it has its highest worth in that meek or even joyful acquiescence which counts nothing a sacrifice for Jesus' sake, and feels surprised when others speak of self-denial.

There have been ages when men thought they must fly to the wilderness or cloister to deny themselves. The Lord Jesus has shown us that the best place to practise self-denial is in our ordinary intercourse with men. So Paul also says here, 'We *ought not to please ourselves,* let every one please his *neighbour unto edification. For even Christ pleased not Himself.* Therefore receive ye one another, *even as Christ* has received you.' Nothing less than the self-denial of

our Lord, who pleased not Himself, is our law. What He was we must be. What He did we must do.

What a glorious life will it be in the Church of Christ when this law prevails! each one considers it the object of existence to make others happy. Each one denies himself, seeks not his own, esteems others better than himself. All thought of taking offence, of wounded pride, of being slighted or passed by, would pass away. As a follower of Christ, each would seek to bear the weak and to please his neighbour. The true self-denial would be seen in this, that no one would think of himself, but live in and for others.

'If any man will *come after* me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and *follow me*.' This word not only gives us the will, but also the power for self-denial. He who does not simply wish to reach heaven through Christ, but comes after Him for His own sake, will *follow* Him. And in his heart Jesus speedily takes the place that self had. *Jesus only* becomes the centre and object of such a life. The undivided surrender to follow Him is crowned with this wonderful blessing, that Christ by His Spirit Himself becomes his life. Christ's spirit of self-denying love is poured out upon him, and to deny self is the greatest joy of his heart, and the means of the deepest communion with God. Self-denial is no longer a work he simply does as a means of attaining perfection for himself. Nor is it merely a negative victory, of which the main feature is the keeping self in check. Christ has taken the place of self, and His love and gentleness and kind-

ness flow out to others, now that self is parted with. No command becomes more blessed or more natural than this: 'We *ought not to please ourselves, for even Christ pleased not Himself.*' 'If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and FOLLOW ME.'

Beloved Lord, I thank Thee for this new call to follow Thee, and not to please myself, even as Thou didst not please Thyself. I thank Thee that I have now no longer, as once, to hear it with fear. Thy commandments are no longer grievous to me; Thy yoke is easy, and Thy burden light. What I see in Thy life on earth as my example, is the certain pledge of what I receive from Thy life in heaven. I did not always so understand it. Long after I had known Thee, I dared not think of self-denial. But for him who has learned what it is to take up the cross, to be crucified with Thee, and to see the old man nailed to the cross, it is no longer terrible to deny it. Oh, my Lord! who would not be ashamed to be the friend of a crucified and accursed criminal? Since I have learned that Thou art my life, and that Thou dost wholly take charge of the life that is wholly entrusted to Thee, to work both to will and to do, I do not fear but Thou wilt give me the love and wisdom in the path of self-denial joyfully to follow Thy footsteps. Blessed Lord, Thy disciples are not worthy of this grace; but since Thou hast chosen us to it, we will gladly seek not to please ourselves, but every one his neighbour, as Thou hast taught us. And may Thy Holy Spirit work it in us mightily. Amen.

Eighth Day.

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LIKE CHRIST:

In His Self-sacrifice.

'Walk in love, *even as* Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.'—Eph. v. 2.

'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.'—1 John iii. 16.

WHAT is the connection between self-sacrifice and self-denial? The former is the root from which the latter springs. In self-denial, self-sacrifice is tested, and thus strengthened and prepared each time again to renew its entire surrender. Thus it was with the Lord Jesus. His incarnation was a self-sacrifice; His life of self-denial was the proof of it; through this, again, He was prepared for the great act of self-sacrifice in His death on the cross. Thus it is with the Christian. His conversion is to a certain extent the sacrifice of self, though but a very partial one, owing to ignorance and weakness. From that first act of self-surrender arises the obligation to the exercise of daily self-denial. The Christian's efforts to do so show him his weakness, and prepare him for that new and

more entire self-sacrifice in which he first finds strength for more continuous self-denial.

Self-sacrifice is of the very essence of true love. The very nature and blessedness of love consist in forgetting self, and seeking its happiness in the loved one. Where in the beloved there is a want or need, love is impelled by its very nature to offer up its own happiness for that of the other, to unite itself to the beloved one, and at any sacrifice to make him the sharer of its own blessedness.

Who can say whether this is not one of the secrets which eternity will reveal, that sin was permitted because otherwise God's love could never so fully have been revealed? The highest glory of God's love was manifested in the self-sacrifice of Christ. It is the highest glory of the Christian to be like his Lord in this. Without entire self-sacrifice the new command, the command of love, cannot be fulfilled. Without entire self-sacrifice we cannot love as Jesus loved. 'Be ye imitators of God,' says the apostle, 'and walk in love, even as Christ hath loved us, and given Himself a sacrifice for us.' Let all your walk and conversation be, according to Christ's example, in love. It was this love that made His sacrifice acceptable in God's sight, a sweet-smelling savour. As His love exhibited itself in self-sacrifice, let your love prove itself to be conformable to His in the daily self-sacrifice for the welfare of others, so will it also be acceptable in the sight of God. 'We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.'

Down even into the daily affairs of home life, in the intercourse between husband and wife, in the relation of master and servant, Christ's self-sacrifice must be the rule of our walk. 'Likewise, ye husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and *gave Himself for it.*'

And mark specially the words, 'Hath given Himself *for us* an offering *to God.*' We see that self-sacrifice has here two sides. Christ's self-sacrifice had a Godward as well as a manward aspect. It was *for us*, but it was *to God* that He offered Himself as a sacrifice. In all our self-sacrifice there must be these two sides in union, though now the one and then again the other may be more prominent.

It is only when we sacrifice ourselves *to God* that there will be the power for an entire self-sacrifice. The Holy Spirit reveals to the believer the right of God's claim on us, how we are not our own, but His. The realization of how absolutely we are God's property, bought and paid for with blood, of how we are loved with such a wonderful love, and of what blessedness there is in the full surrender to Him, leads the believer to yield himself a whole burnt-offering. He lays himself on the altar of consecration, and finds it his highest joy to be a sweet-smelling savour *to his God*, God-devoted and God-accepted. And then it becomes his first and most earnest desire to know how God would have him show this entire self-sacrifice in life and walk.

God points him to Christ's example. He was a

sweet-smelling savour to God when He gave Himself a sacrifice *for us*. For every Christian who gives himself entirely to His service, God has the same honour as He had for His Son, He uses him as an instrument of blessing to others. Therefore John says, 'He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?' The self-sacrifice in which you have devoted yourself to God's service, binds you also to serve your fellow-men; the same act which makes you entirely God's, makes you entirely theirs.[1]

It is just this surrender to God that gives the power for self-sacrifice towards others, and even makes it a joy. When faith has first appropriated the promise, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me,' I understand the glorious harmony between sacrifice *to God* and sacrifice *for men*. My intercourse with my fellow-men, instead of being, as many complain, a hindrance to unbroken communion with God, becomes an opportunity of offering myself unceasingly to Him.

Blessed calling! to walk in love EVEN AS Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us a sacrifice and sweet-smelling savour to God. Only thus can the Church fulfil its destiny, and prove to the world that she is set apart to continue Christ's work of self-sacrificing love, and fill up that which remaineth behind of the afflictions of Christ.

But does God really expect us to deny ourselves

[1] See note.

so entirely for others? Is it not asking too much? Can any one really sacrifice himself so entirely? Christian! God does expect it. Nothing less than this is the conformity to the image of His Son, to which He predestinated you from eternity. This is the path by which Jesus entered into His glory and blessedness, and by no other way can the disciple enter into the joy of His Lord. *It is in very deed our calling to become exactly like Jesus in His love and self-sacrifice.* 'Walk in love, EVEN AS Christ loved.'

It is a great thing when a believer sees and acknowledges this. That God's people and even God's servants understand it so little, is one great cause of the impotence of the Church. In this matter the Church indeed needs a second reformation. In the great Reformation three centuries ago, the power of Christ's atoning death and righteousness were brought to light, to the great comfort and joy of anxious souls. But we need a second reformation to lift on high the banner of Christ's example as our law, to restore the truth of the power of Christ's resurrection as it makes us partakers of the life and the likeness of our Lord. Christians must not only believe in the full union with their Surety for their reconciliation, but with their Head as their example and their life. They must really represent Christ upon earth, and *let men see in the members* how the Head lived when He was in the flesh. Let us earnestly pray that God's children everywhere may be taught to see their holy calling.

And all ye who already long after it, oh, fear not to yield yourselves to God in the great act of a Christ-like self-sacrifice! In conversion you gave yourself to God. In many an act of self-surrender since then you have again given yourselves to Him. But experience has taught you how much is still wanting. Perhaps you never knew how entire the self-sacrifice must be and could be. Come now and see in Christ your example, and in His sacrifice of Himself on the cross, *what your Father expects of you.* Come now and see in Christ—for He is your head and life—*what He will enable you to be and do.* Believe in Him, that what He accomplished on earth in His life and death as your example, He will now accomplish in you from heaven. Offer yourself to the Father in Christ, with the desire to be, as entirely and completely as He, an offering and a sacrifice unto God, *given up to God for men.* Expect Christ to work this in you and to maintain it. Let your relation to God be clear and distinct; you, like Christ, wholly given up to Him. Then it will no longer be impossible to walk in love as Christ loved us. Then all your intercourse with the brethren and with the world will be the most glorious opportunity of proving before God how completely you have given yourself to *Him*, an offering and a sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savour.

O my God, who am I that Thou shouldest have chosen me to be conformed to the image of Thy Son in His self-sacrificing love? In this is His

divine perfection and glory, that He loved not His own life, but freely offered it for us to Thee in death. And in this I may be like Him; in a walk in love I may prove that I too have offered myself wholly to God.

O my Father, Thy purpose is mine; at this solemn moment I affirm anew my consecration to Thee. Not in my own strength, but in the strength of Him who gave Himself for me. Because Christ, my example, is also my life, I venture to say it: Father, in Christ, like Christ, I yield myself a sacrifice to Thee for men.

Father, teach me how Thou wouldest use me to manifest Thy love to the world. Thou wilt do it by filling me full of Thy love. Father, do it, that I may walk in love, *even as* Christ loved us. May I live every day as one who has the power of Thy Holy Spirit to enable me to love every one with whom I come into contact, under every possible circumstance, to love with a love which is not of me, but of Thyself. Amen.

NOTE.

One of the most earnest and successful labourers in the work of saving the lost writes as follows: 'If I had not been led to a clearer and fuller experience of what salvation is, I never could have gone through the work of the last few years. But, at the same time, one thing has continually been becoming clearer, that we cannot speak of *unbroken fellowship* with our Lord unless we give up ourselves, and that *without ceasing*, to a world

lying in the wicked one, to save in the strength of our Lord what He gives us to save. A consecration to the Lord *without a consecration to our neighbour* becomes an illusion or leads to fanaticism. It is this giving up of ourselves to the world to be its light and salt, to love it even when it hates us, that constitutes for all really consecrated souls the true battle of life. To find in labour our rest, and in fighting the sin around us in the power of Jesus our highest joy, to rejoice more in the happiness of others than our own, and so not to seek anything for ourselves, but everything for others, this, this is our holy calling.'

May God help us not only to admire such thoughts, but at once to join the little bands among His children who are really giving up everything, and making their life-work the winning of souls for Jesus.

NINTH DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

Not of the World.

'These are in the world.' 'The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, *even as* I am not of the world.' 'They are not of the world, *even as* I am not of the world.'—JOHN xvii. 11, 14, 16.

'*Even as* He is, so are we in this world.'—1 JOHN iv. 17.

IF Jesus was not of the world, why was He in the world? If there was no sympathy between Him and the world, why was it that He lived in it, and did not remain in that high and holy and blessed world to which He belonged? The answer is, The Father had sent Him into the world. In these two expressions, 'In the world,' 'Not of the world,' we find the whole secret of His work as Saviour, of His glory as the God-man.

'*In the world;*' in human nature, because God would show that this nature belonged to Him, and not to the god of this world, that it was most fit to receive the divine life, and in this divine life to reach its highest glory.

'*In the world;*' in fellowship with men, to enter into loving relationship with them, to be seen and

known of them, and thus to win them back to the Father.

'*In the world;*' in the struggle with the powers which rule the world, to learn obedience, and so to perfect and sanctify human nature.

'*Not of the world,*' but of heaven, to manifest and bring nigh the life that is in God, and which man had lost, that men might see and long for it.

'*Not of the world;*' witnessing against its sin and departure from God, its impotence to know and please God.

'*Not of the world;*' founding a kingdom entirely heavenly in origin and nature, entirely independent of all that the world holds desirable or necessary, with principles and laws the very opposite of those that rule in the world.

'*Not of the world;*' in order to redeem all who belong to Him, and bring them into that new and heavenly kingdom which He had revealed.

'*In the world,*' '*Not of the world.*' In these two expressions we have revealed to us the great mystery of the person and work of the Saviour. 'Not *of* the world,' in the power of His divine holiness judging and overcoming it; still *in* the world, and through His humanity and love seeking and saving all that can be saved. The most entire separation from the world, with the closest fellowship with those in the world; these two extremes meet in Jesus, in His own person He has reconciled them. And it is the calling of the Christian in his life to prove that these two dispositions,

however much they may seem at variance, can in our life too be united in perfect harmony. In each believer there must be seen a heavenly life shining out through earthly forms.

To take one of these two truths and exclusively cultivate it, is not so difficult. So you have those who have taken 'Not of the world' as their motto. From the earliest ages, when people thought they must fly to cloisters and deserts to serve God, to our own days, when some seek to show the earnestness of their piety by severity in judging all that is in the world, there have been those who counted this the only true religion. There was separation from sin, but then there was also no fellowship with sinners. The sinner could not feel that he was surrounded with the atmosphere of a tender heavenly love. It was a one-sided and therefore a defective religion.

Then there are those who, on the other side, lay stress on 'In the world,' and very specially appeal to the words of the apostle, 'For then must ye needs go out of the world.' They think that, by showing that religion does not make us unfriendly or unfit to enjoy all that there is to enjoy, they will induce the world to serve God. It has often happened that they have indeed succeeded in making the world very religious, but at too high a price;—religion became very worldly.

The true follower of Jesus must combine both. If he does not clearly show that he is not of the world, and prove the greater blessedness of a

heavenly life, how will he convince the world of sin, or prove to her that there is a higher life, or teach her to desire what she does not yet possess? Earnestness, and holiness, and separation from the spirit of the world must characterize him. His heavenly spirit must manifest that he belongs to a kingdom not of this world. An unworldly, an other-worldly, a heavenly spirit must breathe in him.

And still he must live as one who is 'in the world.' Expressly placed here of God, among those who are of the world, to win their hearts, to acquire influence over them, and to communicate to them of the Spirit which is in him, it must be the great study of his life how he can fulfil this his mission. Not, as the wisdom of the world would teach, by yielding, and complying, and softening down the solemn realities of religion, will he succeed. No, but only by walking in the footsteps of Him who alone can teach how to be in the world and yet not of it. Only by a life of serving and suffering love, in which the Christian distinctly confesses that the glory of God is the aim of his existence, and in which, full of the Holy Spirit, he brings men into direct contact with the warmth and love of the heavenly life, can he be a blessing to the world.

Oh, who will teach us the heavenly secret, of uniting every day in our lives what is so difficult to unite,—to be in the world, and not of the world? He can do it who has said: 'They are not of the

world, EVEN AS I am not of the world.' That 'EVEN AS' has a deeper meaning and power than we know. If we suffer the Holy Spirit to unfold that word to us, we shall understand what it is to be in the world as He was in the world. That 'EVEN AS' has its root and strength in a life union. In it we shall discover the divine secret, that *the more entirely one is not of the world, the more fit he is to be in the world.* The freer the Church is of the spirit and principles of the world, the more influence she will exert in it.

The life of the world is self-pleasing and self-exaltation. The life of heaven is holy, self-denying love. The weakness of the life of many Christians who seek to separate themselves from the world, is that they have too much of the spirit of the world. They seek their own happiness and perfection more than ought else. Jesus Christ was not of the world, and had nothing of its spirit; this is why He could love sinners, could win them and save them. The believer is as little of the world as Christ. The Lord says: 'Not of the world, EVEN AS I am not of the world.' In his new nature he is born from heaven, has the life and love of heaven in him; his supernatural heavenly life gives him power to be in the world without being of it. The disciple who believes fully in the Christ-likeness of his inner life, will experience the truth of it. He cultivates and gives utterance to the assurance 'EVEN AS Christ, so am I not of the world, because I am in Christ.' He understands that alone in

close union with Christ can his separation from the world be maintained; in as far as Christ lives in him can he lead a heavenly life. He sees that the only way to answer to his calling is, on the one side, as crucified to the world to withdraw himself from its power; and, on the other, as living in Christ to go into it and bless it. He lives in heaven and walks on earth.

Christians! see here the true imitation of Jesus Christ. 'Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord.' Then the promise is fulfilled, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them.' Then Christ sends you, as the Father sent Him, to be in the world as the place ordained of your Father to glorify Him, and to make known His love. Not so much in the desire to leave earth for heaven, as in the willingness to live the life of heaven here on earth, does a truly unworldly, a heavenly spirit, manifest itself.

'Not of the world' is not only separation from and testimony against the world, but is the living manifestation of the spirit, and the love, and the power of the other world, of the heaven to which we belong, in its divine work of making this world partaker of its blessedness.

O Thou great High Priest! who in Thy high-priestly power didst pray for us to the Father, as those who, no more than Thyself, belong to the world, and still must remain in it, let Thy all-prevailing intercession now be effectual in our behalf.

The world has still entrance to our hearts, its selfish spirit is still too much within us. Through unbelief the new nature has not always full power. Lord, we beseech of Thee, as fruit of Thy all-powerful intercession, let that word be fully realized in us: 'Not of the world, EVEN AS I am not of the world.' In our likeness to Thee is our only power against the world.

Lord, we can only be like Thee when we are one with Thee. We can only walk like Thee when we abide in Thee. Blessed Lord, we surrender ourselves to abide in Thee alone. A life entirely given to Thee Thou dost take entire possession of. Let Thy Holy Spirit, who dwells in us, unite us so closely with Thyself that we may always live as not of the world. And let Thy Spirit so make known to us Thy work in the world, that it may be our joy in deep humility and fervent love to exhibit to all what a blessed life there is in the world for those who are not of the world. May the proof that we are not of the world be the tenderness and fervency with which, like Thee, we sacrifice ourselves for those who are in the world. Amen.

TENTH DAY.

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LIKE CHRIST:

In His Heavenly Mission.

'As Thou hast sent me into the world, *even so* have I also sent them into the world.'—JOHN xvii. 18.

'As my Father hath sent me, *even so* send I you.'—JOHN xx. 21.

THE Lord Jesus lived here on earth under a deep consciousness of having a mission from His Father to fulfil. He continually used the expression, 'The Father hath sent me.'[1] He knew what this mission was. He knew the Father had chosen Him, and sent Him into the world with the one purpose of fulfilling that mission, and He knew the Father would give Him all that He needed for it. Faith in the Father having sent Him was the motive and power for all that He did.

In earthly things it is a great help if an ambassador knows clearly what his mission is; that he has nothing to do but to care for its accomplishment; and that he has given himself undividedly to do this one thing. For the

[1] It will repay the trouble to compare carefully the following passages: John v. 24, 30, 37, 38, vi. 38, 39, 40, 44, vii. 16, 28, 29, 33, viii. 16. 18, 26, 29, 42, ix. 4, xi. 42, xii. 44, 45, 49, xiii. 20, xiv. 24, xv. 21, xvi. 25, xvii. 8, 18, 21, 23, 25, xx. 21. Christ wanted men to know that He did not act independently, but on behalf of Another who had sent Him. The consciousness of a mission never left Him for a moment.

Christian it is of no less consequence that he should know that he has a mission, what its nature is, and how he is to accomplish it.

Our heavenly mission is one of the most glorious parts of our conformity to our Lord. He says it plainly in the most solemn moments of His life; 'that EVEN AS the Father sent Him,' so He sends His disciples. He says it to the Father in His high-priestly prayer, as the ground upon which He asks for their keeping and sanctification. He says it to the disciples after His resurrection, as the ground on which they are to receive the Holy Spirit. Nothing will help us more to know and fulfil our mission than to realize how perfectly it corresponds to the mission of Christ, how they are, in fact, identical.

Our mission is like His *in its object*. Why did the Father send His Son? To make known His love and His will in the salvation of sinners. He was to do this, not alone by word and precept, but in His own person, disposition, and conduct to exhibit the Father's holy love. He was so to represent the unseen Father in heaven, that men on earth might know what like the Father was.

After the Lord had fulfilled His mission He ascended into heaven, and became to the world like the Father, the Unseen One. And now He has made over His mission to His disciples, after having shown them how to fulfil it. They must so represent Him, the Invisible One, that from seeing them men can judge what He is. Every Christian

must so be the image of Jesus—must so exhibit in his person and conduct the same love to sinners, and desire for their salvation, as animated Christ, that from them the world may know what like Christ is. Oh, my soul! take time to realize these heavenly thoughts: Our mission is like Christ's in its object, the showing forth of the holy love of heaven in earthly form.

Like Christ's *in its origin too.* It was the Father's love that chose Christ for this work, and counted Him worthy of such honour and trust. We also are chosen by Christ for this work. Every redeemed one knows that it was not he who sought the Lord, but the Lord who sought and chose him. In that seeking and drawing the Lord had expressely this heavenly mission in view. 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit.'

Believer! whoever thou art, and wherever thou dwellest, the Lord, who knows thee and thy surroundings, has need of thee, and has chosen thee to be His representative in the circle in which thou movest. Fix thy heart on this. He has fixed His heart on thee and saved thee, in order that thou shouldest bear and exhibit to those who surround thee the very image of His unseen glory. Oh, think of this origin of thy heavenly mission in His everlasting love, as His had its origin in the love of the Father. Thy mission is in very truth just like His.

Like it, too, *in the fitting for it.* Every

ambassador expects to be supplied with all that he needs for his embassy. 'He who hath sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone;' that word tells us how, when the Father sent the Son, He was always with Him, His strength and comfort. Even so the Church of Christ in her mission: 'Go ye and teach all nations,' has the promise: 'Lo, I am with you alway.' The Christian need never hold back because of unfitness. The Lord does not demand anything which He does not give the power to perform. Every believer may depend on it, that as the Father gave His Holy Spirit to the Son to fit Him for His work, so the Lord Jesus will give His people too all the preparation they need. The grace to show forth Christ evermore, to exhibit the lovely light of His example and likeness, and like Christ Himself to be a Fountain of love and life and blessing to all around, is given to every one who only heartily and believingly takes up his heavenly calling. In this too, that the sender cares for all that is needful for the sent ones, is our mission like His.

And like also *in the consecration which it demands.* The Lord Jesus gave Himself entirely and undividedly over to accomplish His work; He lived for it alone. 'I must work the work of Him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work.' The Father's mission was the only reason of His being on earth; for that alone He would live; to reveal to mankind what a glorious blessed God the Father in heaven was.

As with Jesus, so with us. Christ's mission is *the only reason for our being on earth;* were it not for that, He would take us away. Most believers do not believe this. To fulfil Christ's mission is with them at best something to be done along with other things, for which it is difficult to find time and strength. And yet it is so certainly true: to accomplish Christ's mission is the only reason of my being upon earth. Then first when I believe this, and like my Lord in His mission consecrate myself undividedly to it, shall I indeed live well-pleasing to Him. This heavenly mission is so great and glorious, that without an entire consecration to it we cannot accomplish it. Without this, the powers which fit us for it cannot take possession of us. Without this, we have no liberty to expect the Lord's wonderful help and the fulfilment of all His blessed promises. Just as with Jesus, our heavenly mission demands nothing less than entire consecration. Am I prepared for this? Then I have indeed the key through which the holy hidden glories of this word of Jesus will be revealed to my experience: 'As the Father sent me, even so send I you.'

O brothers! this heavenly mission is indeed worthy that we devote ourselves entirely to it as the only thing we live for.

O Lord Jesus! Thou didst descend from heaven to earth to show us what the life of heaven is. Thou couldst do this because thou wert of heaven. Thou didst bring with Thee the image and Spirit

of the heavenly life to earth. Therefore didst Thou so gloriously exhibit what constitutes the very glory of heaven: the will and love of the unseen Father.

Lord! Thou art now the Invisible One in heaven, and sendest us to represent Thee in Thy heavenly glory as Saviour. Thou dost ask that we should so love men that from us they may form some idea of how Thou lovest them in heaven.

Blessed Lord! our heart cries out: How canst Thou send us with such a calling? How canst Thou expect it of us who have so little love? How can we, who are of the earth earthy, show what the life of heaven is?

Precious Saviour! our souls do bless Thee that we know that Thou dost not demand more than Thou givest. Thou who art Thyself the Life of heaven, Thou livest Thyself in Thy disciples. Blessed be Thy holy name, they have from Thee Thy Holy Spirit from heaven as their life-breath. He is the heavenly life of the soul: whoever surrenders himself to the leading of the Spirit can fulfil his mission. In the joy and power of the Holy Spirit we can be Thy image-bearers, can show to men in some measure what Thy likeness is.

Lord, teach me and all Thy people to understand that we are not of the world, as Thou wert not of the world, and therefore are sent of Thee, even as Thou wert sent of the Father, to prove in our life that we are of that world, full of love, and purity, and blessing, of which Thou wert. Amen.

Eleventh Day.

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LIKE CHRIST:

As the Elect of God.

'Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.'—Rom. viii. 29.

SCRIPTURE teaches us a personal election. It does this not only in single passages; its whole history of the working out here in time of the counsels of eternity proves it. We see continually how the whole future of God's kingdom depends upon the faithful filling of His place by some single person; the only security for the carrying out of God's purpose is His foreordaining of the individual. In predestination alone the history of the world and of God's kingdom, as of the individual believer, has its sure foundation.

There are Christians who cannot see this. They are so afraid of interfering with human responsibility, that they reject the doctrine of divine predestination, because it appears to rob man of his liberty of will and action. Scripture does not share this fear. It speaks in one place of man's free will as though there were no election, in another of election as though there were no free will. Thus

it teaches us that we must hold fast both these truths alongside each other, even when we cannot understand them, or make them perfectly to harmonize. In the light of eternity the solution of the mystery will be given. He who grasps both in faith will speedily experience how little they are in conflict. He will see that the stronger his faith is in God's everlasting purpose, the more his courage for work will be strengthened; while, on the other side, the more he works and is blessed, the clearer it will become that all is of God.

For this reason it is of so much consequence for a believer to make his election sure. The Scriptures give the assurance that if we do this, 'we shall never stumble' (R. V.). The more I believe not only in general that I am elected of God, but see how this election has reference to every part of my calling, the more shall I be strengthened in the conviction that God Himself will perfect His work in me, and that therefore it is possible for me to be all that God really expects. With every duty Scripture lays upon me, with every promise for whose fulfilment I long, I will go to find in God's purposes the firm footing upon which my expectations may rest, and the true measure by which they are to be guided. I shall understand that my life on earth is to be a copy of the heavenly life-plan, that the Father has drawn out, of what I am to be on earth. Christian! make your calling and election sure; let it become clear to you that you are elected, and to what; 'If ye do these things,

ye shall never stumble.' Quiet communion with God on the ground of His unchangeable purpose imparts to the soul an immoveable firmness that keeps from stumbling.

One of the most blessed expressions in regard to God's purpose concerning us in Christ is this word: 'Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.' The man Christ Jesus is the elect of God; in Him election has its beginning and ending. 'In Him we are chosen;' for the sake of our union with Him and to His glory our election took place. The believer who seeks in election merely the certainty of his own salvation, or relief from fear and doubt, knows very little of its real glory. The purposes of election embrace all the riches that are prepared for us in Christ, and reach to every moment and every need of our lives. 'Chosen in Him that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love,' it is only when the connection between election and sanctification is rightly apprehended in the Church that the doctrine of election will bring its full blessing (2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 2). It teaches the believer how it is God who must work all in him, who will work all in him, and how he may rely even in the smallest matters upon the unchangeable purpose of God to work out itself in the accomplishment of everything that He expects of His people. In this light the word 'Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son' gives new strength to every one who has begun to take *what Christ is* as the rule of *what he himself is to be.*

Christian! would you in very deed be *like Christ*, fix your mind upon the thought of how certainly this is God's will concerning you; how the whole of redemption has been planned with the view of your becoming so; how God's purpose is the guarantee that your desires must be fulfilled. There, where your name is written in the book of life, there stands also, 'Predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.' All the powers of the Deity which have already wrought together in the accomplishment of the first part of the eternal purpose, the revealing of the Father's perfect likeness in the man Christ Jesus, are equally engaged to accomplish the second part, and work that likeness in each of God's children. In the work of Christ there is the most perfect provision possible for the carrying out of God's purposes in this. Our union to Christ, held fast in a living faith, will be an all-prevailing power. We can depend upon it as something ordained with a divine certainty, and that must come if we yield ourselves to it. Has not God elected us to be conformed to the image of His Son?

It can easily be understood what a powerful influence the living consciousness of this truth will have. It teaches us to give up ourselves to the Eternal Will, that it may, with divine power, effect its purpose in us. It shows us how useless and impotent our own efforts are to accomplish this work; all that is *of* God must also be *through* Him. He who is the beginning, must be the middle and

the end. In a very wonderful manner it strengthens our faith with a holy boldness to glory in God alone, and to expect from God Himself the fulfilment of every promise and every command, of every part of the purpose of His blessed will.

And where does this likeness to Christ consist? In Sonship. It is to the image of *His Son* we are to be conformed. All the different traits of a Christlike life resolve themselves into this one as their spring and end. We are 'predestinated unto the adoption of *children* by Jesus Christ.' It was *as the Son* Christ lived and served and pleased the Father. It is only *as a son* with the spirit of His own *Son* in my heart, that I can live and serve and please the Father. I must each day walk in the full and clear consciousness: like Christ, I am a son of the Most High God, born from above, the beloved of the Father. As a son the Father is engaged to provide my every need. As a son I live in dependence and trust, in love and obedience, in joy and hope. It is when I live with the Father as a son, that it becomes possible to make any sacrifice and to obey every command.

Believer! take time and prayer to take in this truth, and let it exercise its full power in your soul. Let the Holy Spirit write it into your inmost being, that you are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. The Father's object was the honour of His Son, 'that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.' Let this be your object too in all your life, so to show forth the image of your

Elder Brother, that other Christians may be pointed to Him alone, may praise Him alone, and seek to follow Him more closely too. Let it be the fixed and only purpose of your life, the great object of your believing prayer, that 'Christ be magnified in my body.' This will give you new confidence to ask and expect all that is necessary to live like Christ. Your conformity to Christ will be one of the links connecting the eternal purpose of the Father with the eternal fulfilment of it in the glorifying of the Son. Your conformity to Christ becomes then such a holy, heavenly, divine work, that you realize that it can come only from the Father, but that from Him you can and shall most certainly receive it. What God's purpose has decreed, God's power will perform. What God's love has ordained and commanded, God's love will most certainly accomplish. A living faith in His eternal purpose will become one of the mightiest powers in urging and helping us to live LIKE CHRIST.

O Thou incomprehensible Being, I bow before Thee in deepest humility. It has been such a strength to know that Thy Son has chosen me, in order to send me into the world as Thou hadst sent Him. But here Thou hast led me still higher, and shown that this mission to be as He was in the world was from eternity decreed by Thyself. O my God, my soul bows prostrate in the dust before Thee.

Lord God, now that Thy child comes to Thee for

the fulfilment of Thy own purpose, he dares confidently look for an answer. Thy will is stronger than every hindrance. The faith that trusts Thee will not be put to shame. Lord, in holy reverence and worship, but with childlike confidence and hope, I utter this prayer: Father, give me the desire of my soul, conformity to the image of Thy Son; Father, likeness to Jesus, this is what my soul desires of Thee. Let me, like Him, be Thy holy child.

O my Father, write it in Thy book of remembrance, and write it in my remembrance too, that I have asked it of Thee as what I desire above all things, conformity to the image of Thy Son.

Father, to this Thou hast chosen me; Thou wilt give it me, to Thine own and His glory. Amen.

TWELFTH DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

In doing God's Will.

'For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.'—JOHN vi. 38. v. 30.

IN the will of God we have the highest expression of His divine perfection, and at the same time the highest energy of His divine power. Creation owes its being and its beauty to it; it is the manifestation of God's will. In all nature the will of God is done. In heaven the angels find their highest blessedness in doing God's will. For this man was created with a free will, in order that he might have the power to choose, and of his own accord do God's will. And, lo! deceived by the devil, man committed the great sin of rather doing his own than God's will. *Yes, rather his own than God's will!* in this is the root and the wretchedness of sin.

Jesus Christ became man to bring us back to the blessedness of *doing God's will.* The great object of redemption was to make us and our will free from the power of sin, and to lead us again to live and do the will of God. In His life on earth

He showed us what it is to live only for the will of God; in His death and resurrection He won for us the power to live and do the will of God as He had done.

'Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.' These words, uttered through the Holy Spirit by the mouth of one of His prophets long ages before Christ's birth, are the key to His life on earth. At Nazareth in the carpenter's shop, at the Jordan with John the Baptist, in the wilderness with Satan, in public with the multitude, in living and dying, it was this that inspired and guided and gladdened Him; the glorious will of the Father was to be accomplished in Him and by Him.

Let us not think that this cost Him nothing. He says repeatedly, '*Not my will,* but the will of the Father,' to let us understand that there was in very deed a denial of His own will. In Gethsemane the sacrifice of His own will reached its height, but what took place there was only the perfect expression of what had rendered His whole life acceptable to the Father. Not herein is sin, that man has a creature-will different from the Creator's, but in this, that he clings to his own will when it is seen to be contrary to the will of the Creator. As man, Jesus had a human will, the natural, though not sinful desires which belong to human nature. As man, He did not always know beforehand what the will of God was. He had to wait, and be taught of God, and learn from time to time what that will

was. But when the will of His Father was once known to Him, then He was always ready to give up His own human will, and do the will of the Father. It was this that constituted the perfection and the value of His self-sacrifice. He had once for all surrendered Himself as a man, to live only in and for the will of God, and was always ready, even to the sacrifice of Gethsemane and Calvary, to do that will alone.

It is *this life of obedience*, wrought out by the Lord Jesus in the flesh, that is not only imputed to us, but *imparted through the Holy Spirit*. Through His death our Lord Jesus has atoned for our self-will and disobedience. It was by conquering it in His own perfect obedience that He atoned for it. He has thus not only blotted out the guilt of our selfwill before God, but broken its power in us. In His resurrection He brought from the dead a life that had conquered and destroyed all selfwill. And the believer who knows the power of Jesus' death and resurrection, has the power to consecrate himself entirely to God's will. He knows that the call to follow Christ means nothing less than to take and speak the words of the Master as his own solemn vow, 'I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father.'

To attain this we must begin by taking the same stand that our Lord did. Take God's will as one great whole, as the only thing for which you live on earth. Look at the sun and moon, the grass and flowers, see what glory each of them has, only

because it is just doing God's will. But they do it without knowing it. Thou canst do it still more gloriously, because knowing and willing to do it. Let thine heart be filled with the thought of the glory of God's will concerning His children, and concerning thee, and say that it is thy one purpose that that will should be done in thee. Yield thyself to the Father frequently and distinctly, with the declaration that with thee, as with Jesus, it is a settled thing that His beautiful and blessed will must and shall be done. Say it frequently in thy quiet meditations, with a joyful and trusting heart: PRAISE GOD! I MAY LIVE ONLY TO DO THE WILL OF GOD.

Let no fear keep us back from this. Think not that this will be too hard for us to do; God's will only seems hard as long as we look at it from a distance, and are unwilling to submit to it. Just look again how beautiful the will of God makes everything in nature. Ask yourself, now that He loves and blesses you as a child, if it is right to distrust Him. The will of God is the will of His love, how can you fear to surrender yourself to it?

Nor let the fear that you will not be able to obey that will, keep you back. The Son of God came on earth to show what the life of man must and may become. His resurrection life gives us power to live as He lived. Jesus Christ enables us, through His Spirit, to walk not after the flesh, but according to the will of God.

'I come to do Thy will, O God:' before ever

the Lord Jesus was come down to earth, a believer in the Old Testament was able, through the Spirit, to speak that word of himself as well as for Christ. Christ took it up and filled it with new life-power. And now He expects of His redeemed ones that, since He has been on earth, they will even more heartily and entirely make it their choice. Let us do so. We must not first try and see whether, in single instances, we succeed in doing God's will, in the hope of afterwards attaining to the entire consecration that can say: 'I come to do Thy will.' No, this is not the right way. Let us first recognise God's will as a whole, and the claims it has upon us, as well as its blessedness and glory. Let us surrender ourselves to it as to God Himself, and consider it as one of the first articles of our creed: I am in the world, like Christ, only to do the Father's will. This surrender will teach us with joy to accept every command and every providence as part of the will we have already yielded ourselves to. This surrender will give us courage to wait for God's sure guidance and strength, because the man who lives only for God's will may depend upon it that God takes him for his reckoning. This surrender will lead us deeper into the consciousness of our utter impotence, but also deeper into the fellowship and the likeness of the beloved Son, and make us partakers of all the blessedness and love that the Son has prepared for us. There is nothing that will bring us closer to God in union to Christ than loving and keeping and doing the will of God.

Child of God! one of the first marks of conformity to Christ is obedience, simple and implicit obedience to all the will of God. Let it be the most marked thing in thy life. Begin by a willing and whole-hearted keeping of every one of the commands of God's holy Word. Go on to a very tender yielding to everything that conscience tells thee to be right, even when the Word does not directly command it. So shalt thou rise higher; a hearty obedience to the commandments, as far as thou knowest them, and a ready obedience to conscience wherever it speaks, are the preparation for that divine teaching of the Spirit which will lead thee deeper into the meaning and application of the Word, and into a more direct and spiritual insight into God's will with regard to thyself personally. It is to those *who obey Him* God gives the Holy Spirit, through whom the blessed will of God becomes the light that shines ever more brightly on our path. 'If any man will *do His will*, he shall know.' Blessed will of God! blessed obedience to God's will! oh that we knew to count and keep these as our most precious treasures!

And if ever it appear too hard to live only for God's will, let us remember wherein Christ found His strength: it was because it was *the Father's* will that the Son rejoiced to do it. 'This commandment have I received *of my Father*.' This made even the laying down of His life possible. Our union to Jesus, and our calling to live like Him, ever point us to *His Sonship* as the secret of His life and strength. Let it be our chief desire to say

each day: I am the Father's beloved child, and to think of each commandment as *the Father's* will; a Christlike sense of sonship will lead to a Christ-like obedience.

O my God, I thank Thee for this wondrous gift, Thy Son become man, to teach us how man may do the will of his God. I thank Thee for the glorious calling to be like Him in this too, with Him to taste the blessedness of a life in perfect harmony with Thy glorious and perfect will. I thank Thee for the power given in Christ to do and to bear all that will. I thank Thee that in this too I may be like the first-begotten Son.

I come now, O my Father, afresh to take up this my calling in childlike, joyous trust and love. Lord, I would live wholly and only to do Thy will. I would abide in the Word and wait upon the Spirit. I would, like Thy Son, live in fellowship with Thee in prayer, in the firm confidence that Thou wilt day by day make me to know Thy will more clearly. O my Father, let this my desire be acceptable in Thy sight. Keep it in the thoughts of my heart for ever. Give me grace with true joy continually to say: Not my will, but the will of my Father must be done: I am here on the earth only to do the will of my God. Amen.

THIRTEENTH DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Compassion.

'Then Jesus said, I have compassion on the multitude.' —MATT. xv. 32.

'Shouldest not *thou also* have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, *even as* I had compassion on thee?'—MATT. xviii. 32.

ON three different occasions Matthew tells us that our Lord was moved with compassion on the multitude. His whole life was a manifestation of the compassion with which He had looked on the sinner from everlasting, and of the tenderness with which He was moved at the sight of misery and sorrow. He was in this the true reflection of our compassionate God, of the father who, moved with compassion towards his prodigal son, fell on his neck and kissed him.

In this compassion of the Lord Jesus we can see how He did not look upon the will of God He came to do as a duty or an obligation, but had that divine will dwelling within Him as His own, inspiring and ruling all His sentiments and motives. After He had said, 'I came from heaven *not to do my own will*, but the will of Him that sent me,' He

at once added, 'And *this is the will* of the Father, that of all He hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.' 'And *this is the will* of Him that sent me, that every one which believeth on the Son may have everlasting life.' For the Lord Jesus the will of God consisted not in certain things which were forbidden or commanded. No, He had entered into that which truly forms the very heart of God's will, and that is, that to lost sinners He should give eternal life. Because God Himself is love, His will is that love should have full scope in the salvation of sinners. The Lord Jesus came down to earth in order to manifest and accomplish this will of God. He did not do this as a servant obeying the will of a stranger. In His personal life and all His dispositions He proved that the loving will of His Father to save sinners was His own. Not only His death on Golgotha, but just as much the compassion in which He took and bore the need of all the wretched, and the tenderness of His intercourse with them, was the proof that the Father's will had truly become His own. In every way He showed that life was of no value to Him but as the opportunity of doing the will of His Father.

Beloved followers of Christ, who have offered yourselves to imitate Him, let the will of the Father be to you what it was to your Lord. The will of the Father in the mission of His Son was the manifestation and the triumph of divine compassion in the salvation of lost sinners. Jesus

could not possibly accomplish this will in any other way than by having and showing this compassion. *God's will is for us what it was for Jesus: the salvation of the perishing.* It is impossible for us to fulfil that will otherwise than by having, and bearing about, and showing in our lives, the compassion of our God. The seeking of God's will must not be only denying ourselves certain things which God forbids, and doing certain works which God commands, but must consist specially in this, that we surrender ourselves to have the same mind and disposition towards sinners as God has, and that we find our pleasure and joy alone in living for this. By the most personal devotion to each poor perishing sinner around us, and by our helping them in compassionate love, we can show that the will of God is become our will. With the compassionate God as our Father, with Christ who was so often moved with compassion as our life, nothing can be more just than the command that the life of every Christian should be one of compassionate love.

Compassion is the spirit of love which is awakened by the sight of need or wretchedness. What abundant occasion is there every day for the practice of this heavenly virtue, and what a need of it in a world so full of misery and sin! Every Christian ought therefore by prayer and practice to cultivate a compassionate heart, as one of the most precious marks of likeness to the blessed Master. Everlasting love longs to give itself to a perishing world, and to find its satisfaction in saving the lost. *It*

seeks for vessels which it may fill with the love of God, and send out among the dying that they may drink and live for ever. It asks hearts to fill with its own tender compassion at the sight of all the need in which sinners live, hearts that will reckon it their highest blessedness, as the dispensers of God's compassion, to live entirely to bless and save sinners. O my brother, the everlasting compassion which has had mercy on thee calls thee, as one who has obtained mercy, to come and let it fill thee. It will fit thee, in thy compassion on all around, to be a witness to God's compassionate love.

The opportunity for showing compassion we have all around us. How much there is of temporal want! There are the poor and the sick, widows and orphans, distressed and despondent souls, who need nothing so much as the refreshment a compassionate heart can bring. They live in the midst of Christians, and sometimes complain that it is as if there are children of the world who have more sympathy than those who are only concerned about their own salvation. O brothers, pray earnestly for a compassionate heart, always on the look-out for an opportunity of doing some work of love, always ready to be an instrument of the divine compassion. It was the compassionate sympathy of Jesus that attracted so many to Him upon earth; that same compassionate tenderness will still, more than anything, draw souls to you and to your Lord.[1]

[1] See note.

And how much of spiritual misery surrounds us on all sides! Here is a poor rich man. There is a foolish, thoughtless youth. There is again a poor drunkard, or a hopeless unfortunate. Or perhaps none of these, but simply people entirely wrapt up in the follies of the world which surround them. How often are words of unloving indifference, or harsh judgment, or slothful hopelessness, heard concerning all these! The compassionate heart is wanting. Compassion looks upon the deepest misery as the place prepared for her by God, and is attacted by it. Compassion never wearies, never gives up hope. Compassion will not allow itself to be rejected, for it is the self-denying love of Christ which inspires it.

The Christian does not confine his compassion to his own circle; he has a large heart. His Lord has shown him the whole heathen world as his field of labour. He seeks to be acquainted with the circumstances of the heathen: he carries their burden on his heart; he is really moved with compassion, and means to help them. Whether the heathenism is near or far off, whether he witnesses it in all its filth and degradation, or only hears of it, compassionate love lives only to accomplish God's will in saving the perishing.

LIKE CHRIST *in His compassion:* let this now be our motto. After uttering the parable of the Compassionate Samaritan, who, 'moved with compassion,' helped the wounded stranger, the Lord said, 'Go and do likewise.' He is Himself the compassionate

Samaritan, who speaks to every one of us whom He has saved, 'Go and do likewise.' EVEN AS I have done to you, do ye likewise. We, who owe everything to His compassion, who profess ourselves His followers, who walk in His footsteps and bear His image, oh let us exhibit His compassion to the world. We can do it. He lives in us; His Spirit works in us. Let us with much prayer and firm faith look to *His example* as the *sure promise* of what we can be. It will be to Him an unspeakable joy, if He finds us prepared for it, not only to show His compassion to us, but through us to the world. And ours will be the unutterable joy of having a Christ-like heart, full of compassion and of great mercy.

O my Lord! my calling is becoming almost too high. In Thy compassionate love, too, I must follow and imitate and reproduce Thy life. In the compassion wherewith I see and help every bodily and spiritual misery, in the gentle, tender love wherewith every sinner feels that I long to bless men, must the world form some idea of Thy compassion. Most merciful One! forgive me that the world has seen so little of it in me. Most mighty Redeemer! let Thy compassion not only save me, but so take hold of me and dwell in me that compassion may be the very breath and joy of my life. May Thy compassion towards me be within me a living fountain of compassion towards others.

Lord Jesus, I know Thou canst only give this on

one condition, that I let go my own life and my efforts to keep and sanctify that life, and suffer Thee to live in me, to be my life. Most merciful One, I yield myself to Thee! Thou hast a right to me, Thou alone. There is nothing more precious to me than Thy compassionate countenance; what can be more blessed than to be like Thee?

Lord, here I am. I have faith in Thee, that Thou Thyself wilt teach and fit me to obey Thy word: 'Thou shouldest have had compassion, even as I had compassion on thee.' In that faith I go out this very day to find in my intercourse with others the opportunity of showing how Thou hast loved me. In that faith it will become the great object of my life to win men to Thee. Amen.

NOTE.

'Evil can only be overcome by the contact of a most personal self-devotion, never by a love that stands at a distance. "Ye are the salt of the earth," Jesus said; *ye yourselves* just as you are, in the midst of society; in every place and every moment a sanctifying power must flow out from you and your presence. Christ *Himself* is the life and the light. In all that He does, or says, or suffers, it is always *Himself;* whoever separates ought from Himself no longer preserves it, it vanishes in his hands. And just this is the radical error of our modern Christianity. Men separate the words and works of Christ from Himself, and so it comes that many, with all they do as Christians, have never found Christ Himself. So there are many who trust in His suffering and merit, who cannot show that they have any real fellowship with Him,

or truly follow Him. Christ had His abode not only in Cana of Galilee, but also in Gethsemane and on Calvary. Alas! are there not many who make their boast of the cross, and yet are more afraid of the real cross than they are of the devil? They have so wisely arranged their profession of Christ's cross, that no loss to their honour, their goods, or their liberty can ever come from it. Christ's true and actual imitation must once again, as in the olden times, become the standard of Christendom. Only and alone in this way will faith again conquer unbelief and superstition. Many are labouring hard at present to prove to a doubting world the inspiration of Holy Scripture, the truth of the words and the life of the Lord Jesus. It is labour in vain, to try and prove by words and argument that which can alone *be made known by its own self-evidencing power and its actual presence!* Let the proof be given in your deeds, that the spirit of the miracles dwells in you; *prove above all in your life, that Jesus Christ is continuing in you His heavenly eternal life;* and your words will bring many to believe. But if you are wanting in this demonstration of the Spirit and of power, be not surprised if the world bestow little attention on your eloquent arguments. The hour is come that all Christendom must rise up as one man, and *in the power of Christ repeat over again what Christ Himself did to a perishing world.* This is the need there is for the imitation of Jesus Christ; this is the only valid proof for the truth of Christianity.'[1]

[1] From M. Diemer, *Een nieuw boek van de navolging van Jesus Christus.*

FOURTEENTH DAY.

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LIKE CHRIST:

In His Oneness with the Father.

'Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, *even as* we are. That they all may be one; *even as* Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one *even as* we are one. I in them, and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, *even as* Thou hast loved me.'—JOHN xvii. 11, 21, 22.

WHAT an unspeakable treasure we have in this high-priestly prayer! There the heart of Jesus is laid open to our view, and we see what His love desires for us. There the heavens are opened to us, and we learn what He as our Intercessor is continually asking and obtaining for us from the Father.

In that prayer the mutual union of believers has a larger place than anything else. In His prayer for all who in future shall believe, this is the chief petition, vers. 20-26. Three times He repeats this prayer for their unity.

The Lord tells us plainly why He desires it so strongly. *This unity is the only convincing proof to the world that the Father had sent Him.* With all its blindness, the world knows that selfishness is the curse of sin. It helps but little that God's children tell that they are born again, and that they are happy, that they can do wonders in Jesus' name, or can prove that what the Scriptures teach is the truth. When the world sees a church from which selfishness is banished, then it will acknowledge the divine mission of Christ, because He has wrought such a wonder, a community of men who truly and heartily love one another.

The Lord speaks of this unity three times as the reflection of His own oneness with the Father. He knew that this was the perfection of the Godhead: the Father and Son, as persons separate, and yet perfectly one in the living fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And He cannot imagine anything higher than this, that His believing people should with Him and in Him be one with each other, EVEN AS He and the Father are one.

The intercession of the Lord Jesus avails much; it is all-prevailing. What He asks He receives of His Father. But lo! the blessing which descends finds no entrance in hearts where there is no open door, no place prepared, to receive it. How many believers there are who do not even desire to be one even as the Father and the Son are one! They are so accustomed to a life of selfishness and imperfect love, that they do not even long for such

perfect love: they put off that union until they meet in heaven. And yet the Lord thought of a life on earth when He twice said, 'That the world may know.'

That 'they may be one, EVEN AS we are one.' The Church must be awakened to understand and to value this prayer aright. This union is one of life and love at once. Some explain it as having reference to the hidden life-union which binds all believers even under external divisions. But this is not what the Lord means; He speaks of something that the world can see, something that resembles the union between God the Father and God the Son. The hidden unity of life must be manifest in the visible unity and fellowship of love. Only when it becomes impossible for believers, in the different smaller circles in which they are associated, not to live in the full oneness of love with the children of God around them; only when they learn that a life in love to each other, such as Christ's to us, and the Father's to Him, is simple duty, and begin to cry to God for His Holy Spirit to work it in them, then only will there be a hope of change in this respect. The fire will spread from circle to circle and from church to church, until all who truly do the will of God will consecrate themselves to abide in love, even as God is love.

And what are we to do now, while we wait for and wish to hasten that day? Let every one who takes up earnestly the word of the Master, 'EVEN

AS I, so also ye,' let him begin with his own circle. And in that circle with himself first. However weak or sickly, however perverse or trying the members of Christ's body may be with whom he is surrounded, let him live with them in close fellowship and love. Whether they are willing for it or not, whether they accept or reject, let him love them with a Christ-like love. Yes, to love them as Christ does must be the purpose of his life. This love will find an echo in some hearts at least, and awaken in them the desire, too, to seek after the life of love and perfect oneness.

But what discoveries such effort will bring of the impotence of the believer, who has been hitherto satisfied with the ordinary Christian life, at all to reach this standard! He will soon find that nothing will avail but a personal, undivided consecration. To have a love like Christ's, I must truly have a life like Christ's: *I must live with His life.* The lesson must be learnt anew, that Christ in the fullest sense of the word will be the life of those who dare to trust Him for it. Those who cannot trust with a full trust, cannot love with a full love.

Believer, listen once more to the simple way to such a life. First of all acknowledge your calling to live and love just like Christ. Confess your inability to fulfil this calling, even in the very least. Listen to the word, that Christ is waiting to fit you to fulfil this calling, if you will give yourself unreservedly to Him. Make the surrender in this, that conscious of being utterly unable to do anything in

your own strength, you offer yourself to your Lord to work in you both to will and to do. And count then most confidently upon Him, who in the power of His unceasing intercession can save completely, to work in you what He has asked of His Father for you. Yes, count on Him who has said to the Father, 'Thou in me and I in them, that they may be one, EVEN AS we are one,' that He will manifest His life in you with heavenly power. As you live with His life, you will love with His love.

Beloved fellow-Christians, the oneness of Christ with the Father is our model: even as they, so must we be one. Let us love one another, serve one another, bear with one another, help one another, live for one another. For this our love is too small: but we will earnestly pray that Christ give us His love wherewith to love. With God's love shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, we shall be so one that the world will know that it is indeed the truth, that the Father sent Christ into the world, and that Christ has given in us the very life and love of heaven.

Holy Father, we know now with what petitions He, who ever liveth to make intercession, continually approaches Thee. It is for the perfect unity of His disciples. Father, we too would cry to Thee for this blessing. Alas, how divided is Thy Church! It is not the division of language or country that we deplore, not even the difference of doctrine or teaching that so much grieves us. But, Lord! the

want of that unity of spirit and love whereby Thy Church should convince the world that she is from heaven.

O Lord! we desire to confess before Thee with deep shame the coldness, and selfishness, and distrust, and bitterness that is still at times to be seen among Thy children. We confess before Thee our own want of that fervent and perfect love to which Thou hast called us. O forgive, and have mercy upon us.

Lord God! visit Thy people. It is through the one Spirit that we can know and show our unity in the one Lord. Let Thy Holy Spirit work powerfully in Thy believing people to make them one. Let it be felt in every circle where God's children meet each other, how indispensable a close union in the love of Jesus is. And let my heart, too, be delivered from self, to realize, in the fellowship with Thy children, how we are one, EVEN AS Thou, Father and Thy Son art one. Amen.

FIFTEENTH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Dependence on the Father.

'Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing: for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth: and greater works than these will He show Him, that ye may marvel.'—JOHN v. 19, 20.

'I know mine own, and mine own know me, *even as* the Father knoweth me and I know the Father.'—JOHN x. 15 (R. V.).

OUR relation to Jesus is the exact counterpart of His to the Father. And so the words in which He sets forth His intercourse with the Father have their truth in us too. And as the words of Jesus in John v. describe the natural relation between every father and son, whether on earth or in heaven, they are applicable not only to the Only-begotten, but to every one who in and like Jesus is called a son of God.

We cannot better catch the simple truth and force of the illustration than by thinking of Jesus with His earthly father in the carpenter's shop learning his trade. The first thing you notice is the entire *dependence:* 'The son can do nothing of

himself, but what he seeth the father doing.' Then you are struck by the implicit *obedience* that just seeks to imitate the father: 'for whatsoever things the father doeth, these doeth the son in like manner.' You then notice the loving *intimacy* to which the father admits him, keeping back none of his secrets: 'for the father loveth the son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth.' And in this dependent obedience on his son's part, and the loving teaching on the father's part, you have the pledge of an ever-growing *advance* to greater works: step by step the son will be led up to all that the father himself can do: 'Greater works than these will he show him, that ye may marvel.'

In this picture we have the reflection of the relationship between God the Father and the Son in His blessed humanity. If His human nature is to be something real and true, and if we are to understand how Christ is in very deed to be our example, we must believe fully in what our blessed Lord here reveals to us of the secrets of His inner life. The words He speaks are literal truth. His dependence on the Father for each moment of His life was absolutely and intensely real: 'The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing.' He counted it no humiliation to wait on Him for His commands: He rather considered it His highest blessedness to let Himself be led and guided of the Father as a child. And accordingly He held Himself bound in strictest obedience to say and do only what the Father

showed Him: 'Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner.'

The proof of this is the exceeding carefulness with which in everything He seeks to keep to Holy Scripture. In His sufferings He will endure all in order that the Scriptures may be fulfilled. For this He remained the whole night in prayer. In such continued prayer He presents His thoughts to the Father, and waits for the answer, that He may know the Father's will. No child in his ignorance, no slave in his bondage, was ever so anxious to keep to what the father or master had said, as the Lord Jesus was to follow the teaching and guidance of His Heavenly Father. On this account the Father kept nothing hid from Him: the entire dependence and willingness always to learn were rewarded with the most perfect communication of all the Father's secrets. 'For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things, and will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.' The Father had formed a glorious life plan for the Son, that in Him the Divine life might be shown forth in the conditions of human existence: this plan was shown to the Son piece by piece until at last all was gloriously accomplished.

Child of God, it is not only for the only-begotten Son that a life plan has been arranged, but for each one of His children. Just in proportion as we live in more or less entire dependence on the Father will this life plan be more or less perfectly worked out in our lives. The nearer the believer comes to

this entire dependence of the Son, 'doing nothing but what He sees the Father do,' and then to His implicit obedience, 'whatsoever He doeth, doing these in like manner,' so much more will the promise be fulfilled to us: 'The Father showeth Him all things that He Himself doeth, and will show Him greater works than these.' LIKE CHRIST! that word calls us to a life of conformity to the Son in His blessed dependence on the Father. Each one of us is invited thus to live.

To such a life in dependence on the Father, the first thing that is necessary is a firm faith that He will make known His will to us. I think this is something that keeps many back: they cannot believe that the Lord cares for them so much that He will indeed give Himself the trouble every day to teach them and to make known to them His will, just as He did to Jesus. Christian, thou art of more value to the Father than thou knowest. Thou art as much worth as the price He paid for thee,—that is, the blood of His Son; He therefore attaches the highest value to the least thing that concerns thee, and will guide thee even in what is most insignificant. He longs more for close and constant intercourse with thee than thou canst conceive. He can use thee for His glory, and make something of thee, higher than thou canst understand. The Father loves His child, and shows him what He does. That He proved in Jesus; and He will prove it in us too. There must only be the surrender to expect His teaching. Through His Holy Spirit He

gives this most tenderly. Without removing us from our circle, the Father can so conform us to Christ's image, that we can be a blessing and joy to all. Do not let unbelief of God's compassionate love prevent us from expecting the Father's guidance in all things.

Let the unwillingness to submit yourself as little keep you back. This is the second great hindrance. The desire for independence was the temptation in paradise, is the temptation in each human heart. It seems hard to be nothing, to know nothing, to will nothing. And yet it is so blessed. This dependence brings us into most blessed communion with God: of us it becomes true as of Jesus, 'The Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things whatsoever He doeth.' This dependence takes from us all care and responsibility: we have only to obey orders. It gives real power and strength of will, because we know that He works in us to will and to do. It gives us the blessed assurance that our work will succeed, because we have allowed God alone to take charge of it.

My brother, if you have hitherto known but little of this life of conscious dependence and simple obedience, begin to-day. Let your Saviour be your example in this. It is His blessed will to live in you, and in you to be again what He was here on earth. He only longs for your acquiescence: He will work it in you. Offer yourself to the Father this day, after the example of the First-begotten, to do nothing of yourself but only what the Father

shows you. Fix your gaze on Jesus as also in this the Example and Promise of what you shall be. Adore Him who, for your sake, humbled Himself, and showed how blessed the dependent life can be.

Blessed dependence! it is indeed the disposition which becomes us towards such a God. It gives Him the glory which belongs to Him as God. It keeps the soul in peace and rest, for it allows God to care for all. It keeps the mind quiet and prepared to receive and use the Father's teaching. And it is so gloriously rewarded in the deeper experience of holy intercourse, and the continued ever-advancing discoveries of His will and work with which the Father crowns it. Blessed dependence! in which the Son lived on earth, thou art the desire of my soul.

Blessed dependence! it was because Jesus knew that He was *a Son* that He thus loved to be dependent on *the Father*. Of all the teaching in regard to the likeness to Christ this is the centre and sum: I must live as a Son with my Father. If I stand clear in this relationship, *as a son realizing that the Father is everything to me*, a sonlike life, living through the Father, living for the Father, will be its natural and spontaneous outcome.

O my Father, the longer I fix my gaze upon the image of the Son, the more I discover the fearful ruin of my nature, and how far sin has estranged me from Thee. To be dependent upon Thee: there can be no higher blessedness than this; to trust in

all things in a God such as Thou art, so wise and good, so rich and powerful. And lo! it has become the most difficult thing there can be; we would rather be dependent on our own folly than the God of all glory. Even Thine own children, O most blessed Father! often think it so hard to give up their own thoughts and will, and to believe that absolute dependence on God, to the very least things, is alone true blessedness.

Lord! I come to Thee with the humble prayer: teach me this. He who purchased with His own blood for me the everlasting blessedness, hath shown me in His own life wherein that blessedness consists. And I know He will now lead and keep me in it. O my Father! in Thy Son I yield myself to Thee, to be made like Him, like Him to do nothing of myself, but what I see the Father doing. Father! Thou wilt take even me too, like the First-born, and for His sake, into Thy training, and show me what Thou doest. O my God! be Thou a Father unto me as unto Christ, and let me be Thy son, as He was. Amen.

Sixteenth Day.

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Love.

'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; *even as* I have loved you, that *ye also* love one another.'—John xiii. 34.

'This is my commandment, That ye love one another, *even as* I have loved you.'—John xv. 12.

EVEN AS: We begin to understand somewhat of the blessedness of that little word. It is not the command of a law which only convinces of sin and impotence; it is a new command under a new covenant, that is established upon better promises. It is the command of Him who asks nothing that He has not provided, and now offers to bestow. It is the assurance that He expects nothing from us, that He does not work in us: EVEN AS I have loved you, and every moment am pouring out that love upon you through the Holy Spirit, EVEN SO do ye love one another. The measure, the strength, and the work of your love you will find in my love to you.

EVEN AS I have loved you: that word gives us the *measure* of the love wherewith we must love

each other. True love knows no measure: it gives itself entirely. It may take into consideration the time and measure of showing it; but love itself is ever whole and undivided. This is the greatest glory of Divine Love that we have, in the Father and Son, two persons, who in love remain One Being, each losing Himself in the other. This is the glory of the love of Jesus, who is the image of God, that He loves us even as the Father loves Him. And this is the glory of brotherly love, that it will know of no other law, than to love even as God and Christ.

He who would be like Christ must unhesitatingly accept this as his rule of life. He knows how difficult, how impossible it often is thus to love brethren, in whom there is so much that is offensive or unamiable. Before going out to meet them in circumstances where his love may be tried, he goes in secret to the Lord, and with his eye fixed on his own sin and unworthiness asks: How much owest thou thy Lord? He goes to the cross and seeks there to fathom the love wherewith the Lord has loved him. He lets the light of the immeasurable love of Him who is in heaven, his Head and his Brother, shine in upon his soul, until he learns to feel Divine Love has but one law: love seeks not its own, love gives itself wholly. And he lays himself on the altar before his Lord: even as Thou hast loved me, so will I love the brethren. In virtue of my union with Jesus, and in Jesus with them, there can be no question of anything less: I love them as Christ did. Oh that Christians would

close their ears to all the reasonings of their own hearts, and fix their eyes only on the law which He who loves them has promulgated in His own example; they would realize that there is nothing for them to do but this,—to accept His commands and to obey them.

Our love may recognise no other measure than His, because His love is *the strength* of ours. The love of Christ is no mere idea or sentiment; it is a real divine life power. As long as the Christian does not understand this, it cannot exert its full power in him. But when his faith rises to realize that Christ's love is nothing less than the imparting of Himself and His love to the beloved, and he becomes rooted in this love as the source whence his life derives its sustenance, then he sees that his Lord simply asks that he should allow His love to flow through him. He must live in a Christ-given strength: the love of Christ constrains him, and enables him to love as He did.

From this love of Christ the Christian also learns what *the work* of his love to the brethren must be. We have already had occasion to speak of many manifestations of love: its loving service, its self-denial, its meekness. Love is the root of all these. It teaches the disciple to look upon himself as really called upon to be, in his little circle, just like Jesus, the one who lives solely to love and help others. Paul prays for the Philippians: 'That your love may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment' (Phil. i. 9). Love does not compre-

hend at once what the work is that it can do. The believer who prays that his love may abound in knowledge, and really takes Christ's example as his rule of life, will be taught what a great and glorious work there is for him to do. The Church of God, and every child of God, as well as the world, has an unspeakable need of love, of the manifestation of Christ's love. The Christian who really takes the Lord's word, 'Love one another, *even as* I have loved you,' as a command that must be obeyed, carries about a power for blessing and life for all with whom he comes in contact. Love is the explanation of the whole wonderful life of Christ, and of the wonder of His death: Divine Love in God's children will still work its mighty wonders.

'Behold what manner of love!' 'Behold how He loved!' These words are the superscription over the love of the Father and of the Son. They must yet become the keywords to the life of every Christian. They will be so where in living faith and true consecration the command of Christ to love, even as He loved, is accepted as the law of life. As early as the call of Abraham this principle was deposited as a living seed in God's kingdom, that what God is for us, we must be for others. 'I will bless thee,' 'and thou shalt be a blessing.' If 'I have loved you' is the highest manifestation of what God is for us, then 'Even so love ye' must be the first and highest expression of what the child of God must be. In preaching, as in the life of the

Church, it must be understood: *The love which loves like Christ is the sign of true discipleship.*

Beloved Christians! Christ Jesus longs for you in order to make you, amid those who surround you, a very fountain of love. The love of Heaven would fain take possession of you, in order that, in and through you, it may work its blessed work on earth. Yield to its rule. Offer yourself unreservedly to its indwelling. Honour it by the confident assurance that it can teach you to love as Jesus loved. As conformity to the Lord Jesus must be the chief mark of your Christian walk, so love must be the chief mark of that conformity. Be not disheartened if you do not attain it at once. Only keep fast hold of the command, 'Love, even as I have loved you.' It takes time to grow into it. Take time in secret to gaze on that image of love. Take time in prayer and meditation, to fan the desire for it into a burning flame. Take time to survey all around you, whoever they be, and whatever may happen, with this one thought, 'I must love them.' Take time to become conscious of your union with your Lord, that every fear as to the possibility of thus loving, may be met with the word: 'Have not I commanded you: Love as I have loved'? Christian, take time in loving communion with Jesus your loving example, and you will joyfully fulfil this command, too, to love even as He did.

Lord Jesus, who hast loved me so wonderfully and now commandest me to love even as Thou

behold me at Thy feet. Joyfully would I accept Thy commands, and now go out in Thy strength to manifest Thy love to all.

In Thy strength, O my Lord! Be therefore pleased to reveal Thy love to me. Shed abroad Thy love in my heart through Thy Holy Spirit. Let me live each moment in the experience that I am the beloved of God.

Lord, let me understand that I can love, not with my own, but with Thy love. Thou livest in me, Thy Spirit dwells and works in me; from Thee there streams into me the love with which I can love others. Thou dost only ask of me that I understand and accept my calling, and that I surrender myself to live as Thou didst. Thou wouldest that I look upon my old nature with its selfishness and unlovingness as crucified, and in faith prepare to do as Thou commandest.

Lord, I do it. In the strength of my Lord, I would live *to love even as Thou hast loved me.* Amen.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

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LIKE CHRIST:

In His Praying.

'And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into *a desert place*, and there prayed.'—MARK i. 35.

'And He saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart *into a desert place*, and rest awhile.'—MARK vi. 31.

IN His life of secret prayer, too, my Saviour is my example. He could not maintain the heavenly life in His soul without continually separating Himself from man, and communing with His Father. With the heavenly life in me it is no otherwise: it has the same need of entire separation from man, the need not only of single moments, but of time enough for intercourse with the Fountain of Life, the Father in Heaven.

It was at the commencement of His public ministry that the event happened which so attracted the attention of His disciples that they wrote it down. After a day full of wonders and of work at Capernaum (vers. 21–32), the press in the evening became still greater. The whole town is before the door; sick are healed, and devils are

cast out. It is late before they get to sleep; in the throng there is little time for quiet or for secret prayer. And lo, as they rise early in the morning, they find Him gone. In the silence of the night He has gone out to seek a place of solitude in the wilderness; when they find Him there, He is still praying.

And why did my Saviour need these hours of prayer? Did He not know the blessedness of silently lifting up His soul to God in the midst of the most pressing business? Did not the Father dwell in Him? and did He not in the depth of His heart enjoy unbroken communion with Him? Yes, that hidden life was indeed His portion. But that life, as subject to the law of humanity, had need of continual refreshing and renewing from the fountain. It was a life of dependence; just because it was strong and true, it could not bear the loss of direct and constant intercourse with the Father, with whom and in whom it had its being and its blessedness.

What a lesson for every Christian! Much intercourse with man is dissipating, and dangerous to our spiritual life: it brings us under the influence of the visible and temporal. Nothing can atone for the loss of secret and direct intercourse with God. Even work in the service of God and of love is exhausting: we cannot bless others without power going out from us; this must be renewed from above. The law of the manna, that what is heavenly cannot remain good long

upon earth, but must day by day be renewed afresh from heaven, still holds good. Jesus Christ teaches it us: I need every day time to have communion with my Father in secret. My life is like His, a life hid in heaven, in God; it needs time day by day to be fed from heaven. It is *from heaven* alone that the power to lead *a heavenly life* on earth can come.

And what may have been the prayers that occupied our Lord there so long? If I could hear Him pray, how I might learn how I too must pray! God be praised! of His prayers we have more than one recorded, that in them too we might learn to follow His holy example. In the high-priestly prayer (John xvii.) we hear Him speak, as in the deep calm of heaven, to His Father; in His Gethsemane prayer, a few hours later, we see Him call out of the depths of trouble and darkness unto God. In these two prayers we have all: the highest and the deepest that there is to be found in the communion of prayer between Father and Son.

In both these prayers we see how He addresses God. Each time it is *Father! O my Father!* In that word lies the secret of all prayer. The Lord knew that He was a Son, and that the Father loved Him: with that word He placed Himself in the full light of the Father's countenance. This was to Him the greatest need and greatest blessing of prayer, to enter into the full enjoyment of the Father's love. Let it be thus with me too. Let

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the principal part of my prayer be, the holy silence and adoration of faith, in which I wait upon God, until He reveals Himself to me, and gives me, through His Spirit, the loving assurance that He looks down upon me as a Father, that I am well-pleasing to Him. He who in prayer has not time in quietness of soul, and in full consciousness of its meaning, to say Abba Father, has missed the best part of prayer. It is in prayer that the witness of the Spirit, that we are children of God, and that the Father draws nigh and delights in us, must be exercised and strengthened. 'If our heart condemn us not, we have confidence toward God; and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we obey His commandments, and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.'

In both these prayers I also see what He desired: *that the Father may be glorified.* He speaks: 'I have glorified Thee; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son *also may glorify Thee.*' That will assuredly have been the spirit of every prayer; the entire surrender of Himself only to live for the Father's will and glory. All that He asked had but one object, 'That God might be glorified.' In this too He is my example. I must seek to have the spirit of each prayer I offer: Father! bless Thy child, and glorify Thy grace in me, only that Thy child may glorify Thee. Everything in the universe must show forth God's glory. The Christian who is inspired with this thought, and avails himself of prayer to express it, until he is

thoroughly imbued with it, will have power in prayer. Even of His work in heaven our Lord says: 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, *that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*' O my soul, learn from thy Saviour, ere ever thou pourest out thy desires in prayer first to yield thyself as a whole burnt-offering, with the one object that God may be glorified in thee.

Then thou hast sure ground on which to pray. Thou wilt feel the strong desire, as well as the full liberty, to ask the Father that in each part of Christ's example, in each feature of Christ's image, thou mayest be made like Him, that so God may be glorified. Thou wilt understand how, only in continually renewed prayer, the soul can surrender itself to wait that God may from heaven work in it what will be to His glory. Because Jesus surrendered Himself so entirely to the glory of His Father, He was worthy to be our Mediator, and could in His high-priestly prayer ask such great blessings for His people. Learn like Jesus only to seek God's glory in prayer, and thou shalt become a true intercessor, who can not only approach the throne of grace with his own needs, but can also pray for others the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man that availeth much. The words which the Saviour put into our mouth in the Lord's Prayer: 'Thy will be done,' because He was made like unto His brethren in all things, He took from our lips again and made His own

in Gethsemane, that from Him we might receive them back again, in the power of His atonement and intercession, and so be able to pray them even as He had done. Thou too shalt become Christlike in that priestly intercession, on which the unity and prosperity of the Church and the salvation of sinners so much depend.

And he who in every prayer makes God's glory the chief object will also, if God calls him to it, have strength for the prayer of Gethsemane. Every prayer of Christ was intercession, because He had given Himself for us; all He asked and received was in our interest; every prayer He prayed was in the spirit of self-sacrifice. Give thyself too wholly to God for man, and as with Jesus so with us, the entire sacrifice of ourselves to God in every prayer of daily life is the only preparation for those single hours of soul-struggle in which we may be called to some special act of the surrender of the will that costs us tears and anguish. But he who has learnt the former will surely receive strength for the latter.

O my brother! if thou and I would be like Jesus, we must especially contemplate Jesus praying alone in the wilderness. *There is the secret of His wonderful life.* What He did and spoke to man, *was first spoken and lived through with the Father.* In communion with Him, the anointing with the Holy Spirit was each day renewed. He who would be like Him in his walk and conversation, must simply begin here, that he follows Jesus

into solitude. Even though it cost the sacrifice of night rest, of business, of intercourse with friends, *the time must be found to be alone with the Father.* Besides the ordinary hour of prayer, he will feel at times irresistibly drawn to enter into the holy place, and not to come thence until it has anew been revealed to him that God is his portion. In his secret chamber, with closed door, or in the solitude of the wilderness, God must be found every day, and our fellowship with Him renewed. If Christ needed it, how much more we! What it was to Him it will be for us.

What it was to Him is apparent from what is written of His baptism: 'It came to pass that, Jesus also being baptized *and praying*, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him: and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased.' Yes, this will be to us the blessing of prayer: the opened heaven, the baptism of the Spirit, the Father's voice, the blessed assurance of His love and good pleasure. *As with Jesus, so with us; from above, from above, must it all come in answer to prayer.*

Christlike praying in secret will be the secret of Christlike living in public. O let us rise and avail ourselves of our wonderful privilege —the Christlike boldness of access into the Father's presence, the Christlike liberty with God in prayer.

O my blessed Lord, Thou hast called me, and I have followed Thee, that I may bear Thy image in all things. Daily would I seek Thy footsteps, that I may be led of Thee whithersoever Thou goest. This day I have found them, wet with the dew of night, leading to the wilderness. There I have seen Thee kneeling for hours before the Father. There I have heard Thee, too, in prayer. Thou givest up all to the Father's glory, and from the Father dost ask, and expect, and receive all. Impress, I beseech Thee, this wonderful vision deep in my soul: my Saviour rising up a great while before day to seek communion with His Father, and to ask and obtain in prayer all that He needed for His life and work.

O my Lord! who am I that I may thus listen to Thee? Yea, who am I that Thou dost call me to pray, even as Thou hast done? Precious Saviour, from the depths of my heart I beseech Thee, awaken in me the same strong need of secret prayer. Convince me more deeply that, as with Thee so with me, the Divine life cannot attain its full growth without much secret communion with my heavenly Father, so that my soul may indeed dwell in the light of His countenance. Let this conviction awaken in me such burning desire that I may not rest until each day afresh my soul has been baptized in the streams of heavenly love. O Thou, who art my Example and Intercessor! teach me to pray like Thee. Amen.

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Use of Scripture.

'That all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.'—LUKE xxiv. 44.

WHAT the Lord Jesus accomplished here on earth as man He owed greatly to His use of the Scriptures. He found in them the way marked in which He had to walk, the food and the strength on which He could work, the weapon by which He could overcome every enemy. The Scriptures were indeed indispensable to Him through all His life and passion: from beginning to end His life was the fulfilment of what had been written of Him in the volume of the Book.

It is scarcely necessary to adduce proofs of this. In the temptation in the wilderness it was by His '*It is written*' that He conquered Satan. In His conflicts with the Pharisees He continually appealed to the Word: '*What saith the Scripture?*' '*Have ye not read?*' '*Is it not written?*' In His intercourse with His disciples it was always from the Scriptures that He proved the certainty and

necessity of His sufferings and resurrection: '*How otherwise can the Scriptures be fulfilled?*' And in His intercourse with His Father in His last sufferings, it is in the words of Scripture that He pours out the complaint of being forsaken, and then again commends His spirit into the Father's hands. All this has a very deep meaning. He was Himself the living Word. He had the Spirit without measure. If ever any one, He could have done without the written Word. And yet we see that it is everything to Him. More than any one else He thus shows us that *the life of God in human flesh and the word of God in human speech* are inseparably connected. Jesus would not have been what He was, could not have done what He did, had He not yielded Himself step by step to be led and sustained by the Word of God.

Let us try and understand what this teaches us. The Word of God is more than once called Seed; it is the seed of the Divine life. We know what seed is. It is that wonderful organism in which the life, the invisible essence of a plant or tree, is so concentrated and embodied that it can be taken away and made available to impart the life of the tree elsewhere. This use may be twofold. As fruit we eat it, for instance, in the corn that gives us bread; and the life of the plant becomes our nourishment and our life. Or we sow it, and the life of the plant reproduces and multiplies itself. In both aspects the Word of God is seed.

True life is found only in God. But that life cannot be imparted to us unless set before us in some shape in which we know and apprehend it. It is in the Word of God that the Invisible Divine life takes shape, and brings itself within our reach, and becomes communicable. The life, the thoughts, the sentiments, the power of God are embodied in His words. And it is only through His Word that the life of God can really enter into us. His Word is the seed of the Heavenly life.

As the bread of life we eat it, we feed upon it. In eating our daily bread, the body takes in the nourishment which visible nature, the sun and the earth, prepared for us in the seed-corn. We assimilate it, and it becomes our very own, part of ourselves, it is our life. In feeding upon the Word of God, the powers of the Heavenly life enter into us, and become our very own; we assimilate them, they become a part of ourselves, the life of our life.

Or we use the seed to plant. The words of God are sown in our heart. They have a Divine power of reproduction and multiplication. The very life that is in them, the Divine thought, or disposition, or powers that each of them contains, takes roots in the believing heart and grows up; and the very thing of which the word was the expression, is produced within us. The words of God are the seeds of the fulness of the Divine life.

When the Lord Jesus was made man, He became entirely dependent upon the Word of God, He sub-

mitted Himself wholly to it. His mother taught it Him. The teachers of Nazareth instructed Him in it. In meditation and prayer, in the exercise of obedience and faith, He was led, during His silent years of preparation, to understand and appropriate it. The Word of the Father was to the Son the life of His soul. What He said in the wilderness was spoken from His inmost personal experience: 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' He felt He could not live but as the Word brought Him the life of the Father. His whole life was a life of faith, a depending on the Word of the Father. The Word was to Him not instead of the Father, but the vehicle for the living fellowship with the living God. And He had His whole mind and heart so filled with it, that the Holy Spirit could at each moment find within Him, all ready for use, the right word to suggest just as He needed it.

Child of God! would you become a man of God, strong in faith, full of blessing, rich in fruit to the glory of God, be full of the Word of God. Like Christ, make the Word your bread. Let it dwell richly in you. Have your heart full of it. Feed on it. Believe it. Obey it. It is only by believing and obeying that the Word can enter into our inward parts, into our very being. Take it day by day as the Word that proceedeth, not has proceeded, but proceedeth, is proceeding out of the mouth of God, as the Word of the living God, who in it holds living fellowship with His children, and speaks to

them in living power. Take your thoughts of God's will, and God's work, and God's purpose with you, and the world, not from the Church, not from Christians around you, but from the Word taught you by the Father, and like Christ, you will be able to fulfil all that is written in the Scripture concerning you.

In Christ's use of Scripture the most remarkable thing is this: *He found Himself there; He saw there His own image and likeness.* And He gave Himself to the fulfilment of what He found written there. It was this that encouraged Him under the bitterest sufferings, and strengthened Him for the most difficult work. Everywhere He saw traced by God's own hand the Divine waymark: *through suffering to glory.* He had but one thought: to be what the Father had said He should be, to have His life correspond exactly to the image of what He should be as He found it in the Word of God.

Disciple of Jesus, in the Scriptures *thy likeness too is to be found*, a picture of what the Father means thee to be. Seek to have a deep and clear impression of what the Father says in His word that thou shouldest be. If this is once fully understood, it is inconceivable what courage it will give to conquer every difficulty. To know: it is ordained of God; I have seen what has been written concerning me in God's book; I have seen the image of what I am called in God's counsel to be: this thought inspires the soul with a faith that conquers the world.

The Lord Jesus found His own image not only

in the institutions, but specially in the believers of the Old Testament. Moses and Aaron, Joshua, David, and the Prophets, were types. And so He is Himself again the image of believers in the New Testament. It is especially in *Him and His example* that we must find our own image in the Scriptures. 'To be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord,' we must in the Scripture-glass gaze on that image as our own. In order to accomplish His work in us, the Spirit teaches us to take Christ as in very deed our Example, and to gaze on every feature as the promise of what we can be.

Blessed the Christian who has truly done this; who has not only found Jesus in the Scriptures, but also in His image the promise and example of what he is to become. Blessed the Christian who yields himself to be taught by the Holy Spirit not to indulge in human thoughts as to the Scriptures and what it says of believers, but in simplicity to accept what it reveals of God's thoughts about His children.

Child of God! it was 'according to the Scriptures' that Jesus Christ lived and died; it was 'according to the Scriptures' that He was raised again: all that the Scriptures said He must do or suffer He was able to accomplish, because He knew and obeyed them. All that the Scriptures had promised that the Father should do for Him, the Father did. O give thyself up with an undivided heart to learn in the Scriptures what God says and seeks of thee

Let the Scriptures in which Jesus found every day the food of His life, be thy daily food and meditation. Go to God's Word each day with the joyful and confident expectation, that through the blessed Spirit, who dwells in us, the Word will indeed accomplish its Divine purpose in thee. Every word of God is full of a Divine life and power. Be assured that when thou dost seek to use the Scriptures as Christ used them, they will do for thee what they did for Him. God has marked out the plan of thy life in His Word; each day thou wilt find some portion of it there. Nothing makes a man more strong and courageous than the assurance that he is just living out the will of God. God Himself, who had thy image portrayed in the Scriptures, will see to it that the Scriptures are fulfilled in thee, if like His Son thou wilt but surrender thyself to this as the highest object of thy life.

O Lord, my God! I thank Thee for Thy precious Word, the Divine glass of all unseen and eternal realities. I thank Thee that I have in it the image of Thy Son, who is Thy image, and also, O wonderful grace! my image. I thank Thee that as I gaze on Him I may also see what I can be.

O my Father! teach me rightly to understand what a blessing Thy Word can bring me. To Thy Son, when here on earth, it was the manifestation of Thy will, the communication of Thy life and strength, the fellowship with Thyself. In the acceptance and the surrender to Thy Word He was

able to fulfil all Thy counsel. May Thy Word be all this to me too. Make it to me, each day afresh through the unction of the Holy Spirit, the Word proceeding from the mouth of God, the voice of Thy living presence speaking to me. May I feel with each word of Thine that it is God coming to impart to me somewhat of His own life. Teach me to keep it hidden in my heart as a Divine seed, which in its own time will spring up and reproduce in me in Divine reality the very life that was hid in it, the very thing which I at first only saw in it as a thought. Teach me above all, O my God, to find in it Him who is its centre and substance, Himself the Eternal Word. Finding Him, and myself in Him, as my Head and Exemplar, I shall learn like Him to count Thy Word my food and my life.

I ask this, O my God, in the name of our blessed Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

NINETEENTH DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

In Forgiving.

'**Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: *even as* Christ forgave you, *so also do ye*.**'—COL. iii. 13.

IN the life of grace forgiveness is one of the first blessings we receive from God. It is also one of the most glorious. It is the transition from the old to the new life; the sign and pledge of God's love: with it we receive the right to all the spiritual gifts which are prepared for us in Christ. The redeemed saint can never forget, either here or in eternity, that he is a forgiven sinner. Nothing works more mightily to inflame his love, to awaken his joy, or to strengthen his courage, than the experience, continually renewed by the Holy Spirit as a living reality, of God's forgiving love. Every day, yes, every thought of God reminds him: I owe all to pardoning grace.

This forgiving love is one of the greatest marvels in the manifestation of the Divine nature. In it God finds His glory and blessedness. And it is in this glory and blessedness God wants His redeemed people to share, when He calls upon them, as soon

and as much as they have received forgiveness, also to bestow it upon others.

Have you ever noticed how often and how expressly the Lord Jesus spoke of it? If we read thoughtfully our Lord's words in Matt. vi. 12, 15, xviii. 2-25, Mark xi. 25, we shall understand how inseparably the two are united: God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of others. After the Lord was ascended to grant repentance and forgiveness of sins, the Scriptures say of Him just what He had said of the Father, we must forgive like Him. As our text expresses it, *even as Christ* has forgiven you, *so also do ye*. We must be like God, like Christ, in forgiving.

It is not difficult to find the reason for this. When forgiving love comes to us, it is not only to deliver us from punishment. No, much more; it seeks to win us for its own, to take possession of us and to dwell in us. And when thus it has come down to dwell in us, it does not lose its own heavenly character and beauty: it still is forgiving love seeking to do its work not alone towards us, but in us, and through us, leading and enabling us to forgive those who sin against us. So much so is this the case, that we are told that not to forgive is a sure sign that one has himself not been forgiven. He who only seeks forgiveness from selfishness and as freedom from punishment, but has not truly accepted forgiving love to rule his heart and life, proves that God's forgiveness has never really reached him. He who, on the other hand, has really accepted forgiveness will have in the joy

with which he forgives others, a continual confirmation, that his faith in God's forgiveness of himself is a reality. *From Christ* to receive forgiveness, and *like Christ* to bestow it on others: these two are one.

Thus the Scriptures and the Church teach: but what do the lives and experience of Christians say? Alas! how many there are who hardly know that thus it is written, or who, if they know it, think it is more than can be expected from a sinful being; or who, if they agree in general to what has been said, always find a reason, in their own particular case, why it should not be so. Others might be strengthened in evil; the offender would never forgive had the injury been done to him; there are very many eminent Christians who do not act so; such excuses are never wanting. And yet the command is so very simple, and its sanction so very solemn: 'Even as Christ has forgiven you, so also do ye;' 'If ye forgive not, neither will your Father forgive you.' With such human reasonings the Word of God is made of none effect. As though it were not just through forgiving love that God seeks to conquer evil, and therefore forgives even unto seventy times seven. As though it were not plain, that not what the offender would do to me, *but what Christ has done*, must be the rule of my conduct. As though conformity to the example not of Christ Himself, but of pious Christians, were the sign that I have truly received the forgiveness of sins.

Alas! what Church or Christian circle in which the law of forgiving love is not grievously trans-

gressed? How often in our Church assemblies, in philanthropic undertakings as well as in ordinary social intercourse, and even in domestic life, proof is given that to many Christians the call to forgive, just as Christ did, has never yet become a ruling principle of their conduct. On account of a difference of opinion, or opposition to a course of action that appeared to us right, on the ground of a real or a fancied slight, or the report of some unkind or thoughtless word, feelings of resentment, or contempt, or estrangement, have been harboured, instead of loving, and forgiving, and forgetting like Christ. In such the thought has never yet taken possession of mind and heart, that the law of compassion and love and forgiveness, in which the relation of the head to the members is rooted, must rule the whole relation of the members to each other.

Beloved followers of Jesus! called to manifest His likeness to the world, learn that as forgiveness of your sins was one of the first things Jesus did for you, forgiveness of others is one of the first that you can do for Him. And remember that to the new heart there is a joy even sweeter than that of being forgiven; even the joy of forgiving others. The joy of being forgiven is only that of a sinner and of earth: the joy of forgiving is Christ's own joy, the joy of heaven. Oh, come and see that it is nothing less than the work that Christ Himself does, and the joy with which He Himself is satisfied that thou art called to participate in.

It is thus that thou canst bless the world. It is

as the forgiving One that Jesus conquers His enemies, and binds His friends to Himself. It is as the forgiving One that Jesus has set up His kingdom and continually extends it. It is through the same forgiving love, not only preached but *shown in the life of His disciples*, that the Church will convince the world of God's love. If the world see men and women loving and forgiving as Jesus did, it will be compelled to confess that God is with them of a truth.

And if it still appear too hard and too high, remember that this will only be as long as we consult the natural heart. A sinful nature has no taste for this joy, and never can attain it. But in union with Christ we can do it: He who abides in Him walks even as He walked. If you have surrendered yourself to follow Christ in everything, then He will by His Holy Spirit enable you to do this too. Ere ever you come into temptation, accustom yourself to fix your gaze on Jesus, in the heavenly beauty of His forgiving love as your example: 'Beholding the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.' Every time you pray or thank God for forgiveness, make the vow that to the glory of His name you will manifest the same forgiving love to all around you. Before ever there is a question of forgiveness of others, let your heart be filled with love to Christ, love to the brethren, and love to enemies: a heart full of love finds it blessed to forgive. Let, in each little circumstance of daily life when the

temptation not to forgive might arise, the opportunity be joyfully welcomed to show how truly you live in God's forgiving love, how glad you are to let its beautiful light shine through you on others, and how blessed a privilege you feel it to be thus too to bear the image of your beloved Lord.

To forgive like Thee, blessed Son of God! I take this as the law of my life. Thou who hast given the command, givest also the power. Thou who hadst love enough to forgive me, wilt also fill me with love and teach me to forgive others. Thou who didst give me the first blessing, in the joy of having my sins forgiven, wilt surely give me the second blessing, the deeper joy of forgiving others as Thou hast forgiven me. Oh, fill me to this end with faith in the power of Thy love in me, to make me like Thyself, to enable me to forgive the seventy times seven, and so to love and bless all around me.

O my Jesus! Thy example is my law: I must be like Thee. And Thy example is my gospel too: I can be as Thou art. Thou art at once my Law and my Life. What Thou demandest of me by Thy example, Thou workest in me by Thy life. I shall forgive like Thee.

Lord, only lead me deeper into my dependence on Thee, into the all-sufficiency of Thy grace and the blessed keeping which comes from Thy indwelling. Then shall I believe and prove the all-prevailing power of love. I shall forgive even as Christ has forgiven me. Amen.

TWENTIETH DAY.

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LIKE CHRIST:

In beholding Him.

'But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into *the same image*, from glory to glory, *even as* by the Spirit of the Lord.'—2 COR. iii. 18.

MOSES had been forty days on the mount in communion with God. When he came down, his face shone with Divine glory. He did not know it himself, but Aaron and the people saw it (Ex. xxxiv. 30). It was so evidently God's glory that Aaron and the people feared to approach him.

In this we have an image of what takes place in the New Testament. The privilege Moses there alone enjoyed is now the portion of every believer. When we behold the glory of God in Christ, in the glass of the Holy Scriptures, His glory shines upon us, and into us, and fills us, until it shines out from us again. By gazing on His glory the believer is changed through the Spirit into the same image. *Beholding Jesus makes us like Him.*

It is a law of nature that the eye exercises a mighty influence on mind and character. The education of a child is carried on greatly through the eye; he is moulded very much by the manners and habits of those he sees continually. To form and mould our

character the Heavenly Father shows us His Divine glory in the face of Jesus. He does it in the expectation that it will give us great joy to gaze upon it, and because He knows that, gazing on it, we shall be conformed to the same image. Let every one who desires to be like Jesus note how he can attain to it.

Look continually to the Divine glory as seen in Christ. What is the special characteristic of that glory? *It is the manifestation of Divine perfection in human form.* The chief marks of the image of the Divine glory in Christ are these two: His humiliation and His love.

There is the glory of His humiliation. When you see how the eternal Son emptied Himself and became man, and how as man He humbled Himself as a servant and was obedient even unto the death of the cross, you have seen the highest glory of God. The glory of God's omnipotence as Creator, and the glory of God's holiness as King, is not so wonderful as this: the glory of grace which humbled itself as a servant to serve God and man. We must learn to look upon this humiliation as really glory. *To be humbled like Christ must be to us the only thing worthy the name of glory on earth.* It must become in our eyes the most beautiful, the most wonderful, the most desirable thing that can be imagined; a very joy to look upon or to think of. The effect of thus gazing upon it and admiring it will be that you will not be able to conceive of any glory greater than to be and act like Jesus, and will long to humble yourself even as He did. Gazing on Jesus, admiring and adoring Him, will work in us the

same mind that there was in Him, and so we shall be changed into His image.

Inseparable from this is the glory of His love. The humiliation leads you back to the love as its origin and power. It is from love that the humiliation has its beauty. Love is the highest glory of God. But this love was a hidden mystery, until it was manifest in Christ Jesus. It is only in His humanity, in His gentle, compassionate, and loving intercourse with men, with foolish, sinful, hostile men, that the glory of Divine love was first really seen. The soul that gets a glimpse of this glory, and that understands that *to love like Christ is alone worthy the name of glory*, will long to become like Christ in this. Beholding this glory of the love of God in Christ, he is changed to the same image.

You would be like Christ? Here is the path. Gaze on the glory of God in Him. *In Him*, that is to say; do not look only to the words and the thoughts and the graces in which His glory is seen, but look to Himself, the living, loving Christ. Behold Him, look into His very eye, look into His face, as a loving friend, as the living God.

Look to Him in adoration. Bow before Him as God. His glory has an almighty living power to impart itself to us, to pass over into us and to fill us.

Look to Him in faith. Exercise the blessed trust that He is yours, that He has given Himself to you, and that you have a claim to all that is in Him. It is His purpose to work out His image in you. Behold Him with the joyful and certain expectation: the glory that I behold in Him is

destined for me. He will give it me; as I gaze and wonder and trust, I become like Christ.

Look to Him with strong desire. Do not yield to the slothfulness of the flesh that is satisfied without the full blessing of conformity to the Lord. Pray God to free you from all carnal resting content with present attainments, and to fill you with the deep unquenchable longing for His glory. Pray most fervently the prayer of Moses, 'Show me Thy glory.' Let nothing discourage you, not even the apparently slow progress you make, but press onwards with ever growing desire after the blessed prospect that God's Word holds out to you: 'We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.'

And as you behold Him, above all, let the look of love not be wanting. Tell Him continually how He has won your heart, how you do love Him, how entirely you belong to Him. Tell Him that to please Him, the beloved One, is your highest, your only joy. Let the bond of love between you and Him be drawn continually closer. Love unites and makes like.

Like Christ! we can be it, we shall be it, each in our measure. The Holy Spirit is the pledge that it shall be. God's Holy Word has said, 'We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by *the Spirit of the Lord.*' This is the Spirit that was in Jesus, and through Whom the Divine glory lived and shone on Him. This Spirit is called 'The Spirit of glory.' This Spirit is in us as in the Lord Jesus, and it is His work, in our silent adoring contemplation, to bring over into us and work within us, what we see in our Lord Jesus.

Through this Spirit we have already Christ's life in us, with all the gifts of His grace. But that life must be stirred up and developed: it must grow up, pass into our whole being, take possession of our entire nature, penetrate and pervade it all. We can count on the Spirit to work this in us, if we but yield ourselves to Him and obey Him. As we gaze on Jesus in the Word, He opens our eyes to see the glory of all that Jesus does and is. He makes us willing to be like Him. He strengthens our faith, that what we behold in Jesus can be in us, because Jesus Himself is ours. He works in us unceasingly the life of abiding in Christ, a whole-hearted union and communion with Him. He does according to the promise: 'The Spirit shall glorify me: for He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you.' We are changed into the image on which we gaze, from glory to glory, *as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Let us only understand, that the fulness of the Spirit is given to us, and that he who believingly surrenders himself to be filled with Him, will experience how gloriously He accomplishes His work of stamping on our souls and lives the image and likeness of Christ.

Brother! beholding Jesus and His glory, you can confidently expect to become like Him: only trust yourself in quietness and restfulness of soul to the leading of the Spirit. '*The Spirit of glory rests upon you.*' Gaze on and adore the glory of God in Christ; you will be changed with Divine power from glory to glory; in the power of the Holy Ghost the mighty transformation will be wrought by which

your desires will be fulfilled, and *like Christ* will be the blessed God-given experience of you life.

O my Lord! I do thank Thee for the glorious assurance that while I am engaged with Thee, in my work of beholding Thy glory, the Holy Spirit is engaged with me, in His work of changing me into that image, and of laying of Thy glory on me.

Lord! grant me to behold Thy glory aright. Moses had been forty days with Thee when Thy glory shone upon Him. I acknowledge that my communion with Thee has been too short and passing, that I have taken too little time to come under the full impression of what Thine image is. Lord! teach me this. Draw me in these my meditations too, to surrender myself to contemplate and adore, until my soul at every line of that image may exclaim: 'This is glorious! this is the glory of God! O my God, show me Thy glory.

And strengthen my faith, blessed Lord! that, even when I am not conscious of any special experience, the Holy Spirit will do His work. Moses knew not that his face shone. Lord! keep me from looking at self: May I be so taken up only with Thee as to forget and lose myself in Thee. Lord! it is he who is dead to self who lives in Thee.

O my Lord, as often as I gaze upon Thine image and Thine example, I would do it in the faith, that Thy Holy Spirit will fill me, will take entire possession of me, and so work Thy likeness in me, that the world may see in me somewhat of Thy glory. In this faith I will venture to take Thy

precious word, 'FROM GLORY TO GLORY,' as my watch-word, to be to me the promise of a grace that grows richer every day, of a blessing that is ever ready to surpass itself, and to make what has been given only the pledge of the better that is to come. Precious Saviour! gazing on Thee it shall indeed be so, 'From glory to glory.' Amen.

NOTE.

I have left the preceding piece as it was originally published in Dutch. The English Revised Version translates: 'But we all, with unveiled face *reflecting* as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit;' and gives in the margin '*beholding* as in a mirror.' It is difficult to settle which is the better translation, as the original can bear both meanings. I confess that *beholding* appears to me better to suit the passage: the reflecting the image can only come after we have been, or at least as we are being, 'transformed into the same image.' It is only as we are transformed into it we can reflect it: the means of the transformation appear to be almost better expressed by *beholding* than *reflecting*. However this may be, even if we prefer to translate reflecting, what has been said on beholding does not lose its force: it is the intent, longing, loving, adoring gaze on the glory of God in the face of the Beloved Son that transforms.

What rich instruction in regard to the Divine Photography of which the text speaks there is in what we see in the human art! In the practice of the photographer we see two things: faith in the power and effects of light, and the wise adjustment of everything in obedience to its laws. With what care the tenderly sensitive plate is prepared to receive the impression! with what precision its relative position

to the object to be portrayed is adjusted! how still and undisturbed it is then held face to face with that object! Having done this, the photographer leaves the light to do its wonderful work: his work is indeed a work of faith.

May we learn the precious lessons. Let us believe in the light, in the power of the light of God, to transcribe Christ's image on our heart. 'We *are changed* into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord.' Let us not seek to do the work the Spirit must do: let us simply trust Him to do it. Our duty is, to seek the prepared heart, waiting, longing, praying for the likeness; to take our place face to face with Jesus, studying, gazing, loving, worshipping, and believing that the wonderful vision of that Crucified One is the sure promise of what we can be; and then, putting aside all that can distract, in stillness of soul, silent unto God, just to allow the Blessed Spirit as the Light of God to do the work. Not less surely or wonderfully than in the light-printing which is done here on earth, will our souls receive and show the impress of that wonderful likeness.

I feel tempted to add one thought: what a solemn calling that of ministers as the servants of this Heavenly Photography, 'ministers of the Spirit' in His work (see 2 Cor. iv. 6): to lead believers on, and point them to Jesus and every trait in that blessed face and life as what they are to be changed to; to help them to that wistful longing, that deep thirsting for conformity to Jesus, which is the true preparation of soul; to teach them how, both in public worship and private prayer, they have just to place themselves face to face with their Lord, and give Him time, as they unbare and expose their whole inner being to the beams of His love and His glory, to come in and take possession, by His Spirit to transform them into His own likeness.

'Who is sufficient for these things? Our sufficiency is of God, who hath made us able ministers of the Spirit.'

TWENTY-FIRST DAY.

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LIKE CHRIST:

In His Humility.

'In lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself. Have this mind *in you*, which was *also in Christ Jesus*, who, being in the form of God, emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross.'—PHIL. ii. 3-8 (R.V.).

IN this wonderful passage we have a summary of all the most precious truths that cluster round the person of the blessed Son of God. There is first, His adorable Divinity: '*in the form of God*,' '*equal with God*.' Then comes the mystery of His incarnation, in that word of deep and inexhaustible meaning: '*He emptied Himself*.' The atonement follows, with the humiliation, and obedience, and suffering, and death, whence it derives its worth: '*He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*.' And all is crowned by His glorious exaltation: '*God hath highly exalted Him*.' Christ as God, Christ becoming man, Christ as man in humiliation working out our redemption, and

Christ in glory as Lord of all: such are the treasures of wisdom this passage contains.

Volumes have been written on the discussion of some of the words the passage contains. And yet sufficient attention has not always been given to the connection in which the Holy Spirit gives this wondrous teaching. It is not in the first place as a statement of truth for the refutation of error, or the strengthening of faith. The object is a very different one. Among the Philippians there was still pride and want of love: it is with the distinct view of setting Christ's example before them, and teaching them to humble themselves as He did, that this portion of inspiration was given: 'In lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself. Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus.' He who does not study this portion of God's Word with the wish to become lowly as Christ was, has never used it for the one great purpose for which God gave it. Christ descending from the throne of God, and seeking His way back there as man through the humiliation of the cross, reveals the only way by which we ever can reach that throne. The faith which, with His atonement, accepts His example too, is alone true faith. Each soul that would truly belong to Him must in union with Him have His Spirit, His disposition, and His image.

'Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God emptied Himself, and as a man humbled Himself.' We

must be like Christ in His self-emptying and self-humiliation. The first great act of self-abnegation, in which as God He emptied Himself of His Divine glory and power and laid it aside, was followed up by the no less wondrous humbling of Himself as man, to the death of the cross. And in this amazing twofold humiliation, the astonishment of the universe and the delight of the Father, Holy Scripture with the utmost simplicity tells us we must, as a matter of course, be like Christ.

And does Paul, and do the Scriptures, and does God really expect this of us? Why not? or rather, how can they expect anything else? They know indeed the fearful power of pride and the old Adam in our nature. But they know also that Christ has redeemed us not only from the curse but from the power of sin, and that He gives us His resurrection life and power to enable us to live as He did on earth. They say that He is not only our Surety, but our Example also; so that we not only live through Him, but like Him. And further, not only our Example but also our Head, who lives in us, and continues in us the life He once led on earth. With such a Christ, and such a plan of redemption, can it be otherwise? The follower of Christ must have the same mind as was in Christ; he must especially be like Him in His humility.

Christ's example teaches us that it is not sin that must humble us. This is what many Christians think. They consider daily falls are necessary to

keep us humble. This is not so. There is indeed a humility that is very lovely, and so of great worth, as the beginning of something more, consisting in the acknowledgment of transgression and shortcomings. But there is a humility which is more heavenly still, even like Christ, which consists, even when grace keeps us from sinning, in the self-abasement that can only wonder that God should bless us, and delights to be as nothing before Him to whom we owe all. It is grace we need, and not sin, to make and keep us humble. The heaviest-laden branches always bow the lowest. The greatest flow of water makes the deepest river-bed. The nearer the soul comes to God, the more His majestic Presence makes it feel its littleness. It is this alone that makes it possible for each to count others better than himself. Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God, is our example of humility: it was, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God, that He washed the disciples' feet. It is the Divine presence, the consciousness of the Divine life and the Divine love in us, that will make us humble.

It appears to many Christians an impossibility to say: I will not think of self, I will esteem others better than myself. They ask grace to overcome the worst ebullitions of pride and vainglory, but an entire self-renunciation, such as Christ's, is too difficult and too high for them. If they only understood the deep truth and blessedness of the word, 'He who humbles himself shall be exalted,

'He who loses his life shall find it,' they would not be satisfied with anything less than entire conformity to their Lord in this. And they would find that there is a way to overcome self and self-exaltation: to see it nailed to Christ's cross, and there keep it crucified continually through the Spirit (Gal. v. 24; Rom. viii. 13). He only can grow to such humility, who heartily yields himself to live in the fellowship of Christ's death.

To attain this, two things are necessary. The first is a fixed purpose and surrender henceforth to be nothing and seek nothing for oneself; but to live only for God and our neighbour. The other is the faith that appropriates the power of Christ's death in this also, as our death to sin and our deliverance from its power. This fellowship of Christ's death brings an end to the life, where sin is *too strong for us;* it is the commencement of a life in us where *Christ is too strong for sin.*

It is only under the teaching and powerful working of the Holy Spirit that one can realize, accept, and keep hold of this truth. But God be thanked, we have the Holy Spirit. Oh that we may trust ourselves fully to His guidance. He *will* guide us, it is His work; He will glorify Christ in us. He will teach us to understand that we are dead to sin and the old self, that Christ's life and humility are ours.

Thus Christ's humility is appropriated in faith. This may take place at once. But the appropriation in experience is gradual. Our thoughts and feelings, our very manners and conversation, have been so long

under the dominion of the old self, that it takes time to imbue and permeate and transfigure them with the heavenly light of Christ's humility. At first the conscience is not perfectly enlightened, the spiritual taste and the power of discernment have not yet been exercised. But with each believing renewal of the consecration in the depth of the soul: 'I have surrendered myself to be humble like Jesus,' power will go out from Him, to fill the whole being, until in face, and voice, and action the sanctification of the Spirit will be observable, and the Christian will truly be clothed with humility.

The blessedness of a Christlike humility is unspeakable. It is of great worth in the sight of God: 'He giveth grace to the humble.' In the spiritual life it is the source of rest and joy. To the humble all God does is right and good. Humility is always ready to praise God for the least of His mercies. Humility does not find it difficult to trust. It submits unconditionally to all that God says. The two whom Jesus praises for their great faith are just those who thought least of themselves. The centurion had said, 'I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof;' the Syrophenician woman was content to be numbered with the dogs. In intercourse with men it is the secret of blessing and love. The humble man does not take offence, and is very careful not to give it. He is ever ready to serve his neighbour, because he has learnt from Jesus the Divine beauty of being a servant. He finds favour with God and man.

Oh what a glorious calling for the followers of Christ! To be sent into the world by God to prove that there is nothing more divine than self-humiliation. The humble glorifies God, he leads others to glorify Him, he will at last be glorified with Him. Who would not be humble like Jesus?

O Thou, who didst descend from heaven, and didst humble Thyself to the death of the cross, Thou callest me to take Thy humility as the law of my life.

Lord, teach me to understand the absolute need of this. A proud follower of the humble Jesus this I cannot, I may not be. In the secrecy of my heart, and of my closet, in my house, in presence of friends or enemies, in prosperity or adversity, I would be filled with Thy humility.

O my beloved Lord! I feel the need of a new, a deeper insight into Thy crucifixion, and my part in it. Reveal to me how my old proud self is crucified with Thee. Show me in the light of Thy Spirit how I, God's regenerate child, am dead to sin and its power, and how in communion with Thee sin is powerless. Lord Jesus, who hast conquered sin, strengthen in me the faith that Thou art my life, and that Thou wilt fill me with Thy humility if I will submit to be filled with Thyself and Thy Holy Spirit.

Lord, my hope is in Thee. In faith in Thee I go into the world to show how the same mind that was in Thee is also in Thy children, and teaches us in lowliness of mind each to esteem others better than himself. May God help us. Amen.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

In the Likeness of His Death.

'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.—For in that He died, He died unto sin once.—Likewise reckon *ye also* yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord.'—ROM. vi. 5, 10, 11.

IT is to the death of Christ we owe our salvation. The better we understand the meaning of that death, the richer will be our experience of its power. In these words we are taught what it is to be one with Christ in the likeness of His death. Let every one who truly longs to be like Christ in his life, seek to understand aright what the likeness of His death means.

Christ had a double work to accomplish in His death. The one was, to work out righteousness for us, the other to obtain life for us. When Scripture speaks of the first part of this work, it uses the expression, *Christ died for our sins:* He took sin upon Himself, bore its punishment; so He made atonement, and brought in a righteousness in which we could stand before God. When Scripture

speaks of the second part of this work, it uses the expression: *He died to sin.* Dying *for sin* has reference to the judicial relation between Him and sin: God laid our sin upon Him: through His death atonement is made for sin before God. *Dying to sin* has reference to a personal relation; through His death the connection in which He stood to sin was entirely dissolved. During His life sin had great power to cause Him conflict and suffering: His death made an end of this. Sin had now no more power to tempt or to hurt Him. He was beyond its reach. Death had completely separated between Him and sin. Christ died to sin.

Like Christ, the believer too has died to sin; he is one with Him, in the likeness of His death. And as the knowledge that Christ died for sin as our atonement is indispensable to our justification; so the knowledge that Christ, and we with Him in the likeness of His death, are dead to sin, is indispensable to our sanctification. Let us endeavour to understand this.

It was as the second Adam that Christ died. With the first Adam we had been planted together in the likeness of *his* death: he died, and we with him, and the power of his death works in us; we have in very deed died in him, as truly as he himself died. We understand this. Just so we are one plant with Christ in the likeness of His death: He died to sin, and we in Him; and now the power of His death works in us. We are indeed dead to sin, as truly so as He Himself is.

Through our first birth we were made partakers in Adam's death; through our second birth we become partakers in the death of the second Adam. Every believer who accepts of Christ is partaker of the power of His death, and is dead to sin. But a believer may have much of which he is ignorant. Most believers are in their conversion so occupied with Christ's death *for sin* as their justification, that they do not seek to know what it means, that in Him they are dead *to sin*. When they first learn to feel their need of Him as their sanctification, then the desire is awakened to understand this likeness of His death. They find the secret of holiness in it; that as Christ, so they also have died to sin.

The Christian who does not understand this always imagines that sin is too strong for Him, that sin has still power over him, and that he must sometimes obey it. But he thinks this because he does not know that he, like Christ, is dead to sin. If He but believed and understood what this means, his language would be, 'Christ has died to sin. Sin has nothing more to say to Him. In His life and death sin had power over Him; it was sin that caused Him the sufferings of the cross, and the humiliation of the grave. But He is dead to sin: it has lost all claim over Him, He is entirely and for ever freed from its power. Even so I as a believer. The new life that is in me, is the life of Christ from the dead, a life that has been begotten through death, *a life that is entirely dead to sin.*' The believer as a new creature in Christ Jesus can glory

and say: 'Like Christ I am dead to sin. Sin has no right or power over me whatever. I am freed from it, therefore I need not sin.'

And if the believer still sins, it is because he does not use his privilege to live as one who is dead to sin. Through ignorance or unwatchfulness or unbelief, he forgets the meaning and the power of this likeness of Christ's death, and sins. But if he holds fast what his participation with Christ's death signifies, he has the power to overcome sin. He marks well that it is not said, 'Sin is dead.' No, sin is not dead; sin lives and works still in the flesh. But he himself is dead to sin, and alive to God; and so sin cannot for a single moment, without his consent, have dominion over him. If he sin, it is because he allows it to reign, and submits himself to obey it.

Beloved Christian, who seekest to be like Christ, take the likeness of His death as one of the most glorious parts of the life you covet. Appropriate it first of all in faith. Reckon that you are indeed dead to sin. Let it be a settled thing; God says it to every one of His children, even the weakest; say it before Him too: 'Like Christ I am dead to sin.' Fear not to say it; it is the truth. Ask the Holy Spirit earnestly to enlighten you with regard to this part of your union with Christ, so that it may not only be a doctrine, but power and truth.

Endeavour to understand more deeply what it says to live as dead to sin, as one who, in dying, has been freed from its dominion, and who can now

reign in life through Jesus Christ over it. Then there will follow upon the likeness of His death, accepted in faith, the conformity to His death (Phil. iii.),[1] something that is gradually and increasingly appropriated, as Christ's death manifests its full power in all the faculties and powers of your life.

And in order to have the full benefit of this likeness of Christ's death, notice particularly two things. The one is the obligation under which it brings you, 'How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?' Endeavour to enter more deeply into the meaning of this death of Christ into which you have been baptized. His death meant: Rather die than sin: willing to die in order to overcome sin: dead, and therefore released from the power of sin. Let this also be your position: 'Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?' Let the Holy Spirit baptize you continually deeper into His death, until the power of God's Word, dead to sin until the conformity to Christ's death, is discernible in all your walk and conversation.

The other lesson is this: The likeness of Christ's death is not only an obligation but a power. O

[1] *The likeness of Christ's death* in Rom. vi. precedes the likeness of His resurrection; no one can be made alive in Him who has not given himself up to die with Him. *The conformity to Christ's death* in Phil. iii. is spoken of as coming after the knowing Him in the power of His resurrection: the growth of the resurrection life within us leads to a deeper experience of the death. **The two continually act and react.**

Christian longing to be Christlike, if there be one thing you need more than and above all else, it is this: to know the exceeding greatness of God's power that worketh in you. It was in the power of eternity that Christ in His death wrestled with the powers of hell and conquered. You have part with Christ in His death; you have part in all the powers by which He conquered. Yield yourself joyfully and believingly to be led more deeply into the conformity to Christ's death, then you cannot but become like Him.

O my Lord! how little I have understood Thy grace. I have often read the words, 'planted into the likeness of His death,' and seen that as Thou didst die to sin, so it is said to Thy believing people, 'Likewise also ye.' But I have not understood its power. And so it came that, not knowing the likeness of Thy death, I knew not that I was free from the power of sin, and as a conqueror could have dominion over it. Lord, Thou hast indeed opened to me a glorious prospect. The man who believingly accepts the likeness of Thy death, and according to Thy Word reckons himself dead to sin —sin shall not have dominion over him; he has power to live for God.

Lord, let Thy Holy Spirit reveal this to me more perfectly. I wish to take Thy word in simple faith, to take the position Thou assignest me as one who in Thee is dead to sin. Lord, *in Thee* I am dead to sin. Teach me to hold it fast, or

rather to hold Thee fast in faith, until my whole life be a proof of it. O Lord, take me up and keep me in communion with Thyself, that, abiding in Thee, I may find *in Thee* the death unto sin and the life unto God. Amen.

NOTE.

At a meeting of ministers, where these words in Rom. vi. 11 were being discussed, the question was asked by the leader, which of the five different thoughts of the verse was the most important. He pointed out what these thoughts were. The first, *likewise also ye*, suggesting the complete likeness to Him of whom it had just been said, 'In that He died, He died unto sin once; in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.' The second, *reckon yourselves*, the command in which the duty of a large but simple faith is laid upon us. Then, *dead indeed to sin*, the truth in which the teaching of the previous verses is summed up. Next, *alive unto God*, the never-failing accompaniment and the blessing of the death to sin. And then, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, in Him who is ever root and centre of all Scripture teaching. Which of these clauses must be considered as that the right understanding of which is most essential to the full experience of the whole?

The first answer was at once given, '*dead unto sin.*' It is certainly this expression, the leader remarked, that above all has created such deep interest in this verse, and stirred so much earnest striving to realize what it implies. And yet it does not appear to me the most important.

'*Alive unto God*,' was the answer of a second. For it is the life of Jesus given to us in regeneration that makes us partakers of His death and its power over

sin. 'Dead unto sin' is only the negative aspect of what we have as a positive reality in being alive unto God. If we looked more at the 'alive unto God,' the 'dead unto sin' would be better understood.

'*Reckon yourselves*' was suggested by a third. Is not this command to act faith in what has been prepared us of God the chief thought of the verse, and that, therefore, to which our chief attention must be given?

Another brother now said, '*Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*' Our leader said: I think I have lately been taught that this is indeed that on the right apprehension of which the power of the whole verse depends.

How many have been looking most earnestly for the full insight into the blessedness of being dead unto sin and alive unto God, and yet have failed! How often we have heard them pray, 'Lord, we are not yet utterly dead, but we long to be so'! How many others, who have better understood the text, and have seen that everything depends upon the 'Reckon yourselves to be dead,' upon the faith that accepts God's statement of what is already true and sure, yet confess that their faith is not followed by the power and the blessing they hoped for!

The mistake has been this: they have been more occupied with the blessings to be had in Jesus, 'dead unto sin,' 'alive unto God,' and the question as to their experience of them, or even with the effort to exercise a strong abiding faith in these blessings as theirs, than with JESUS HIMSELF, IN WHOM both the blessings, and the faith that sees them, are ours. The death unto sin, the life unto God, are *His* (see ver. 10), are IN HIM, accomplished, living, actual, mighty realities; it is as *we are* IN HIM, and know ourselves to be *in Him*, and so come away out of ourselves to be and abide *in Him* only and always, that the blessings which there are in Him will, in the most simple and natural way possible, spontaneously become ours in experience, and that we shall be strengthened in faith to claim and enjoy them. It must be Christ Jesus first and Christ Jesus last. He must be all.

See how clearly this comes out in the third verse of the chapter: 'Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized *into Jesus Christ*, were baptized into *His* death?' The baptism into Jesus Christ was the first thing—*that* they had understood and accepted; the baptism into His death followed from it—*this* they were now yet to learn the meaning of. The Lord Jesus had been baptized with water and with the Holy Spirit, and yet He spoke of a baptism yet to come; the full outcome of His first baptism was to be the death of the cross. Even so it is with us. When baptized unto Christ we 'put on Christ' (Gal. iii. 27), we are made partakers of Him and all He is and was, of His death too. But it is only in course of time that we get to understand this, and really to claim the power of *His* death unto sin and *His* living unto God. But we can do this successfully only as we hold fast the initial all-comprehensive blessing, baptized INTO CHRIST. It is the faith that goes away out to take its abode consciously and permanently *in Jesus* that will have the power to say, 'IN CHRIST JESUS' we are dead unto sin, and alive unto God; 'in Christ Jesus,' we do boldly reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God.

'Baptized into His death:' what a word! The death of our Lord Jesus was the chief thing about Him; it gives Him His beauty, His glory, His victory, His power. In the complete conformity to this, the highest privilege of the Christian consists. To be immersed, plunged into, steeped in the death of Christ, the whole being penetrated with the spirit of that death, its obedience, its self-sacrifice, its utter giving up of everything that is of nature, that has been in contact with sin, to pass through the death into the new life that God gives: this must be the highest longing of the Christian. He has been baptized into the death: He yields himself to the Holy Spirit to have all that it contains unfolded and applied. And he does this in simple faith: he knows that *in Christ Jesus* he is dead unto sin and alive unto God. Just as the life unto God is a complete and

perfect thing, and yet subject to the law of growth and increase, so that he goes on to life more abundant, so with the death to sin. In Christ he *is dead* unto sin, completely and entirely, and yet the full enjoyment of what that death means and works in all its extent is matter of growing intelligence and experience.

But let us beware of wearying ourselves—how often we have done so!—with trying more to comprehend exactly, and to realize feelingly, what this death to sin is, and what the conscious reckoning ourselves dead is, than to remember that all this comes only as we are and abide IN CHRIST JESUS, IN WHOM alone these blessings are ours. I may be so occupied with the blessings and their pursuit, that I lose sight and hold of Him in whom I must be abiding most entirely if I am to enjoy them. Let my first aim be in whole-hearted faith and obedience to dwell *in Jesus*, in whom are the death unto sin and the life unto God: the whole state of being which is implied in these words is His—*He lives it, it is His alone*—as I lose myself *in Him*, I may rest assured that the blessing I long for will come, or rather, I shall know that *in Him* I have the thing itself, that Divine life out of death working in me, even when I know not exactly to describe it in words. And I shall see how the whole power and blessedness of the command gathers itself into the closing clause, 'Likewise also ye, reckon yourselves to be indeed dead unto sin, and alive unto God, IN CHRIST JESUS.' IN CHRIST is the root of LIKE CHRIST.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

In the Likeness of His Resurrection.

'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we should be also in the likeness of His resurrection, that *like as Christ* was raised up from the dead by the glory of His Father, *even so we also* should walk in newness of life.'—ROM. vi. 5, 4.

ON the likeness of His death there follows necessarily the likeness of His resurrection. To speak alone of the likeness of His death, of bearing the cross, and of self-denial, gives a onesided view of following Christ. It is only the power of His resurrection that gives us strength to go on from that likeness of His death as what we receive at once by faith, to that conformity to His death which comes as the growth of the inner life. Being dead with Christ refers more to the death of the old life to sin and the world which we abandon; risen with Christ refers to the new life through which the Holy Spirit expels the old. To the Christian who earnestly desires to walk as Christ did, the knowledge of this likeness of His resurrection is indispensable. Let us see if we do not here get the answer

to the question as to where we shall find strength to live in the world as Christ did.

We have already seen how our Lord's life before His death was a life of weakness. As our Surety, sin had great power over Him. It had also power over His disciples, so that He could not give them the Holy Spirit, or do for them what He wished. But with the resurrection all was changed. Raised by the Almighty power of God, His resurrection life was full of the power of eternity. He had not only conquered death and sin for Himself but for His disciples, so that He could from the first day make them partakers of His Spirit, of His joy, and of His heavenly power.

When the Lord Jesus now makes us partakers of His life, then it is not the life that He had before His death, but the resurrection life that He won through death. A life in which sin is already made an end of and put away, a life that has already conquered hell and the devil, the world and the flesh, a life of Divine power in human nature. This is the life that likeness to His resurrection gives us: 'In that He liveth, He liveth unto God. *Ye also likewise*, reckon yourselves alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Oh that through the Holy Spirit God might reveal to us the glory of the life in the likeness of Christ's resurrection! In it we find the secret of power for a life of conformity to Him.

To most Christians this is a mystery, and therefore their life is full of sin and weakness and defeat

They believe in Christ's resurrection as the sufficient proof of their justification. They think that He had to rise again, to continue His work in heaven as Mediator. But that He rose again, in order that His glorious resurrection life might now be *the very power of their daily life*, of this they have no idea. Hence their hopelessness when they hear of following Jesus fully, and being perfectly conformed to His image. They cannot imagine how it can be required of a sinner, that he should in all things act as Christ would have done. They do not know Christ in the power of His resurrection, or the mighty power with which His life now works in those, who are willing to count all things but loss for His sake (Phil. iii. 8; Eph. i. 19, 20). Come, all ye who are weary of a life unlike Jesus, and long to walk always in His footsteps, who begin to see that there is in the Scriptures a better life for you than you have hitherto known, come and let me try to show you the unspeakable treasure that is yours, in your likeness to Christ in His resurrection. Let me ask three questions.

The first is: Are you ready to surrender your life to the rule of Jesus and His resurrection life? I doubt not that the contemplation of Christ's example has convinced you of sin in more than one point. In seeking your own will and glory instead of God's, in ambition and pride and selfishness and want of love towards man, you have seen how far you are from the obedience and humility and love of Jesus. And now it is the question, whether

in view of all these things, in which you have acknowledged sin, you are willing to say: If Jesus will take possession of my life, then I resign all right or wish ever in the least to have or to do my own will. I give my life with all I have and am entirely to Him, always to do what He through His Word and Spirit commands me. If He will *live and rule in me*, I promise unbounded and hearty obedience.

For such a surrender faith is needed; therefore the second question is: Are you prepared to believe that Jesus will take possession of the life entrusted to Him, and that He will rule and keep it? When the believer entrusts his entire spiritual and temporal life completely to Christ, then he learns to understand aright Paul's words: 'I am dead; I live no more: Christ liveth in me.' Dead with Christ and risen again, the living Christ in His resurrection life takes possession of and rules my new life. The resurrection life is not a thing that I may have if I can undertake to keep it: No, just this is what I cannot do. But blessed be God! JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF *is the resurrection and the life*, is the resurrection life. *He Himself will from day to day and hour to hour see to it and ensure that I live as one who is risen with Him.* He does it through that Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of His risen life. The Holy Spirit is in us, and will, if we trust Jesus for it, maintain within us every moment the presence and power of the risen Lord. We need not fear, that we never can succeed in leading such a holy

life as becomes those who are temples of the living God. *We are indeed not able.* But it is not required of us. The living Jesus, who is the resurrection, has shown His power over all our enemies; He Himself, who so loves us, He will work it in us. He gives us the Holy Spirit as our power, and He will perform His work in us with Divine faithfulness, if we will only trust Him; *Christ Himself is our life.*

And now comes the third question: Are you ready to use this resurrection life for the purpose for which God gave it Him, and gives it to you, as a power of blessing to the lost? All desires after the resurrection life will fail, if we are only seeking our own perfection and happiness. God raised up and exalted Jesus to give repentance and remission of sins. He ever lives to pray for sinners. Yield yourself to receive His resurrection life with the same aim. Give yourself wholly to working and praying for the perishing: then will you become a fit vessel and instrument in which the resurrection life can dwell and work out its glorious purposes.

Brother! thy calling is to live like Christ. To this end *thou hast already been made one with Him* in the likeness of His resurrection. The only question is now, whether thou art desirous after the full experience of His resurrection life, whether thou art willing to surrender thy whole life that He Himself may manifest resurrection power in every part of it. I pray thee, do not draw back. Offer thyself unreservedly to Him, with all thy

weakness and unfaithfulness. Believe that as His resurrection was a wonder above all thought and expectation, so He as the Risen One will still work in thee exceeding abundantly above all thou couldst think or desire.

What a difference there was in the life of the disciples before Jesus' death and after His resurrection! Then all was weakness and fear, self and sin: with the resurrection all was power and joy, life and love, and glory. Just as great will the change be, when a believer, who has known Jesus' resurrection only as the ground of his justification, but has not known of the *likeness* of His resurrection, discovers how the Risen One will Himself be his life, and in very deed take on Himself the responsibility for the whole of that life. Oh, brother, who hast not yet experienced this, who art troubled and weary because thou art called to walk like Christ, and canst not do it, come and taste the blessedness of giving thy whole life to the Risen Saviour in the assurance that He will live it for thee.

O Lord! my soul adores Thee as the Prince of life! On the cross Thou didst conquer each one of my enemies, the devil, the flesh, the world, and sin As Conquerer thou didst rise to manifest and maintain the power of Thy risen life in Thy people. Thou hast made them one with Thyself in the likeness of Thy resurrection; now Thou wilt live in them, and show forth in their earthly life the power of Thy heavenly life.

Praised be Thy name for this wonderful grace. Blessed Lord, I come at Thy invitation to offer and surrender to Thee my life, with all it implies. Too long have I striven in my own strength to live like Thee, and not succeeded. The more I sought to walk like Thee, the deeper was my disappointment. I have heard of Thy disciples who tell how blessed it is to cast all care and responsibility for their life on Thee. Lord, I am risen with Thee, one with Thee in the likeness of Thy resurrection; come and take me entirely for Thy own, and be Thou my life.

Above all, I beseech Thee, O my Risen Lord, reveal Thyself to me, as Thou didst to Thy first disciples, in the power of Thy resurrection. It was not enough that after Thy resurrection Thou didst appear to Thy disciples; they knew Thee not till *Thou didst make Thyself known.* Lord Jesus! I do believe in Thee; *be pleased, O be pleased to make Thyself known to me as my Life.* It is Thy work; Thou alone canst do it. I trust Thee for it. And so shall my resurrection life be, like Thine own, a continual source of light and blessing to all who are needing Thee. Amen.

NOTE.

I add here an extract from Marshall *On Sanctification*, in which the reality of our being partakers with Jesus of the very nature in which He lived and died and rose again, is very clearly put.

I have often regretted that the somewhat antiquated style of this writer, and the introduction of questions not of immediate interest to the soul seeking the path of holiness, prevents his book from being as well known as it deserves to be. It is on all hands acknowledged to be the one standard work on the subject. It has been given him by God's Spirit with wonderful simplicity to set forth the great truth that holiness is a new life, a new nature, prepared for us in Christ Jesus, and that therefore every step in the pathway of holiness, whether in the use of the means of grace or in obeying God's commands, must be one of faith. I have thought that an abridgment of the work, in which all that is essential is provided in the author's own words, would supply a real want, and might be a blessing to many. I have prepared such an abridgment, which has been issued by the publishers of the present work, under the title of *The Highway of Holiness.*

'The end of Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection was *to prepare and form an holy nature and frame for us in Himself, to be communicated to us by union* and fellowship with Him; and not to enable us to produce in ourselves the first original of such an holy nature by our own endeavours.

'1. By His *incarnation* there was a man created in a new holy frame, after the holiness of the first Adam's frame had been marred and abolished by the first transgression; and this *new frame* was far more excellent than ever the first Adam's was, because man was really joined to God by a close, inseparable union of the divine and human nature in one person—Christ; so that these natures had communion each with other in their actings, and Christ was able to act in His human nature by power proper to the divine nature, wherein He was one God with the Father.

'Why was it that Christ set up the fallen *nature of man in such a wonderful frame of holiness, in bringing it to live and act by communion with God living and acting in it?*

One great end was, *that He might communicate this excellent frame to His seed* that should by His Spirit be born of Him and be in Him as the last Adam, the quickening Spirit; that, as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we might also bear the image of the heavenly (1 Cor. xv. 45, 49), in holiness here and in glory hereafter. Thus He was born Emmanuel, God with us; because *the fulness of the Godhead with all holiness did first dwell* in Him bodily, even *in His human nature*, that we might be filled with that fulness in Him (Matt. i. 23; Col. ii. 9, 10). Thus He came down from heaven as living bread, that, as He liveth by the Father, so those that eat Him may live by Him (John vi. 51, 57); by the *same life of God in them* that was first in Him.

'2. By His *death* He freed Himself from the guilt of our sins imputed to Him, and from all that innocent weakness of human nature which He had borne for a time for our sakes. And, by freeing Himself, *He prepared a freedom for us from our whole natural condition;* which is both weak as His was, and also polluted with our guilt and sinful corruption. Thus the corrupt natural state which is called in Scripture the "old man" was crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed. And it is destroyed in us, not by any wounds which we ourselves can give it, but by our partaking of that freedom from it, and death unto it, that *is already wrought out for us* by the death of Christ; as is signified by our baptism, wherein we are buried with Christ by the application of His death to us (Rom. vi. 2, 3, 4, 10, 11).

'God "sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin (or 'by a sacrifice for sin,' as in the margin) condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Rom. viii. 3, 4). Observe here, that though Christ died that we might be justified by the righteousness of God and of faith, not by our own righteousness, which is of the law (Rom. x. 4–6; Phil.

iii. 9), yet *He died also*, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, and that by walking after His Spirit, as those that are in Christ (Rom. viii. 4). He is resembled in His death to a corn of wheat dying in the earth that it may propagate its own nature by bringing forth much fruit (John xii. 24); to the passover that was slain, that a feast might be kept upon it; and to bread broken that it may be nourishment to those that eat it (1 Cor. v. 7, 8, and xi. 24); to the rock smitten that water might gush out of it for us to drink (1 Cor. x. 4).

'He died that He might make of Jew and Gentile one new man in Himself (Eph. ii. 15); and that He might see His seed, *i.e.* such as derive their holy nature from Him (Isa. liii. 10). Let these Scriptures be well observed, and they will sufficiently evidence that Christ died, not that we might be able to form an holy nature in ourselves, but that we might *receive one ready prepared and formed in Christ for us*, by union and fellowship with Him.

'3. By His *resurrection* He took possession of spiritual life for us, as now fully procured for us, and made to be our right and property by the merit of His death, and therefore we are said to be quickened together with Christ. His resurrection was our resurrection to the life of holiness, as Adam's fall was our fall into spiritual death. And we are not ourselves the first makers and formers of our new holy nature, any more than of our original corruption, but both *are formed ready for us to partake of them.* And, by union with Christ, *we partake of that spiritual life that He took possession of for us* at His resurrection, and thereby we are enabled to bring forth the fruits of it; as the Scripture showeth by the similitude of a marriage union, Rom. vii. 4: "We are married to Him that is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God."'

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY.

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LIKE CHRIST:

Being made conformable to His Death.

'That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death.'—PHIL. iii. 10.

WE know that the death of Christ was the death of the cross. We know that that death of the cross is His chief glory. Without that death He would not be the Christ. The distinguishing characteristic, the one mark by which He is separated here in earth and in heaven, from all other persons, both in the Divine Being and in God's universe, is this one: He is the Crucified Son of God. Of all the articles of conformity, this must necessarily be the chief and most glorious one —conformity to His death.

This is what made it so attractive to Paul. What were Christ's glory and blessedness must be his glory too: he knows that the most intimate likeness to Christ is conformity to His death. What that death had been to Christ it would be to him, as he grew conformed to it.

Christ's death on the cross had been the end of sin. During His life it could tempt Him: when He died on the cross, He died to sin; it could no more reach Him. Conformity to Christ's death is the power to keep us from the power of sin. As I by the grace of the Holy Spirit am kept in my position as crucified with Christ, and live out my crucifixion life as the Crucified One lives it in me, I am kept from sinning.

Christ's death on the cross was to the Father a sweet-smelling sacrifice, infinitely pleasing. Oh, if I want to dwell in the favour and love of the Father, and be His delight, I am sure there is nothing gives such deep and perfect access to it as being conformable to Christ's death. There is nothing in the universe to the Father so beautiful, so holy, so heavenly, so wonderful as this sight, the Crucified Jesus. And the closer I can get to Him, and the liker, the more conformed to His death I can become, the more surely shall I enter into the very bosom of His love.

Christ's death on the cross was the entrance to the power of the resurrection life, the unchanging life of eternity. In our spiritual life we often have to mourn the breaks, and failures, and intervals that prove to us that there is still something wanting that prevents the resurrection life asserting its full power. The secret is here: there is still some subtle self-life that has not yet been brought into the perfect conformity of Christ's death. We can be sure of it, nothing is needed but a fuller entrance into the

fellowship of the cross to make us to the full partakers of the resurrection joy.

Above all, it was Christ's death on the cross that made Him the life of the world, gave Him the power to bless and to save (John xii. 24, 25). In the conformity to Christ's death there is an end of self: we give up ourselves to live and die for others; we are full of the faith that our surrender of ourselves to bear the sin of others is accepted of the Father. Out of this death we rise, with the power to love and to bless.

And now, what is this conformity to the death of the cross that brings such blessings, and wherein does it consist? We see it in Jesus. The cross means entire self-abnegation. The cross means the death of self,—the utter surrender of our own will and our life to be lost in the will of God, to let God's will do with us what it pleases. This was what the cross meant to Jesus. It cost Him a terrible struggle before He could give Himself up to it. When He was sore amazed and very heavy, and His soul exceeding sorrowful unto death, it was because His whole being shrank back from that cross and its curse. Three times he had to pray before He could fully say, 'Not my will, but Thine be done.' But He did say it. And His giving Himself up to the cross is to say: Let me do anything, rather than that God's will should not be done. I give up everything,—only God's will must be done.

And this is being made conformable to Christ's

death, that we so give away ourselves and our whole life, with its power of willing and acting, to God, that we learn to be and work, and do nothing but what God reveals to us as His will. And such a life is called conformity to the death of Christ, not only because it is somewhat similar to His, but because it is Himself by His Holy Spirit just repeating and acting over again in us the life that animated Him in His crucifixion. Were it not for this, the very thought of such conformity would be akin to blasphemy.

But now it is not so. In the power of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit of the Crucified Jesus, the believer knows that the blessed resurrection life has its power and its glory from its being a crucifixion life, begotten from the cross. He yields himself to it, he believes that it has possession of him. Realizing that he himself has not the power to think or do anything that is good or holy; nay, that the power of the flesh asserts itself and defiles everything that is in him, he yields and holds every power of his being as far as his disposal of them goes in the place of crucifixion and condemnation. And so he yields and holds every power of his being, every faculty of body, soul, and spirit, at the disposal of Jesus. The distrust and denial of self in everything, the trust of Jesus in everything, mark his life. The very spirit of the cross breathes through his whole being.

And so far is it from being, as might appear, a matter of painful strain and weary effort thus to

maintain the crucifixion position, to one who knows Christ in the power of His resurrection—for Paul puts this first—and so is made conformed to His death, it is rest and strength and victory. Because it is not the dead cross, not self's self-denial, not a work in his own strength, that he has to do with, but the living Jesus, in whom the crucifixion is an accomplished thing, already passed into the life of resurrection. 'I have been crucified with Christ: Christ liveth in me;' this it is that gives the courage and the desire for an ever-growing, ever deeper entrance into most perfect conformity with His death.

And how is this blessed conformity to be attained? Paul will give us the answer. '*What things were gain to me,* these I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, I count *all things* but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord, that I may know Him, being made conformed to His death.' The pearl is of great price; but oh! it is worth the purchase. Let us give up all, yes, all, to be admitted by Jesus to a place with Him on the cross.

And if it appear hard to give up all, and then as our reward only have a whole lifetime on the cross, oh let us listen again to Paul as he tells us what made him so willingly give up all, and so intently choose the cross. It was Jesus—Christ Jesus, my Lord. The cross was the place where he could get into fullest union with his Lord. To know *Him,* to win *Him,* to be found in *Him,* to be made *like to Him,*—this was the burning passion that made it

easy to cast away all, that gave the cross such mighty attractive power. Anything to come nearer to Jesus. All for Jesus, was his motto. It contains the twofold answer to the question, How to attain this conformity to Christ's death? The one is, Cast out all. The other, And let Jesus come in. ALL for JESUS.

Yes, it is only knowing Jesus that can make the conformity to His death at all possible. But let the soul win HIM, and be found in HIM, and know HIM in the power of the resurrection, and it becomes more than possible, a blessed reality. Therefore, beloved follower of Jesus, look to Him, look to Him, the Crucified One. Gaze on Him until thy soul has learnt to say: O my Lord, I must be like Thee. Gaze until thou hast seen how He Himself, the Crucified One, in His ever present omnipotence, draws nigh to live in thee and breathe through thy being His crucifixion life. It was through the Eternal Spirit that He offered Himself unto God; that Spirit brings and imparts all that that death on the cross is, and means, and effected, to thee as thy life. By that Holy Spirit Jesus Himself maintains in each soul, who can trust Him for it, the power of the cross as an abiding death to sin and self, and a never-ceasing source of resurrection life and power. Therefore, once again, look to Him, the Living Crucified Jesus.

But remember, above all, that while thou hast to seek the best and the highest with all thy might, the full blessing comes not as the fruit of thy

efforts, but unsought, a free gift to whom it is given from above. It is as it pleases the Lord Jesus to reveal Himself, that we are made conformable to His death. Therefore, seek and get it FROM HIMSELF.

O Lord, such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain to it. To know Thee in the power of Thy resurrection, and to be made conformable to Thy death: these are of the things which are hid from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes, unto those elect souls alone to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom.

O my Lord! I see more than ever what utter folly it is to think of likeness to Thee as an attainment through my effort. I cast myself on Thy mercy: look upon me according to the greatness of Thy loving-kindness; and of Thy free favour reveal Thyself to me. If Thou wilt be pleased to come forth from Thy heavenly dwelling-place, and to draw nigh to me, and to prepare me, and take me up into the full fellowship of Thy life and death, O my Lord, then will I live and die for Thee, and the souls Thou hast died to save.

Blessed Saviour! I know Thou art willing. Thy love to each of Thy redeemed ones is infinite. O teach me, draw me to give up all for Thee, and take eternal possession of me for Thyself. And oh! let some measure of conformity to Thy death, in its self-sacrifice for the perishing, be the mark of my life. Amen.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

Giving His Life for Men.

'Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your slave: *even as* the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to *give His life* a ransom for many.'—MATT. xx. 26, 27, 28.

'Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.'—1 JOHN iii. 16.

IN speaking of the likeness of Christ's death, and of being made conformable to it, of bearing the cross and being crucified with Him, there is one danger to which even the earnest believer is exposed, and that is of seeking after these blessings for his own sake, or, as he thinks, for the glory of God in His own personal perfection. The error would be a fatal one; he would never attain the close conformity to Jesus' death he hoped for; for he would be leaving out just that which is the essential element in the death of Jesus, and in the self-sacrifice it inculcates; that characteristic is its absolute unselfishness, its reference to others. To be made conformable to Christ's death implies a dying to self, a losing sight of self altogether in giving up and laying down our life for others. To

the question, how far we are to go in living for, in loving, in serving, in saving men, the Scriptures do not hesitate to give the unequivocal answer: We are to go as far as Jesus, even to the laying down of our life. We are to consider this so entirely as the object for which we are redeemed, and are left in the world, the one object for which we live, that the laying down of the life in death follows as a matter of course. Like Christ, the only thing that keeps us in this world is to be the glory of God in the salvation of sinners. Scripture does not hesitate to say that it is in His path of suffering, as He goes to work out atonement and redemption, that we are to follow Him.[1]

How clearly this comes out in the words of the Master Himself: 'Whoever will be chief among you, let him be your bond-servant, EVEN AS the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.' The highest in glory will be he who was lowest in service, and likest to the Master in His giving His life a ransom. And so again, a few days later, after having spoken of His own death in the words: 'The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;' He at once applied to His disciples

[1] Compare Matt. xx. 28 with Eph. v. 2, 25, 26; Phil. ii. 5–8; 1 Pet. ii. 21–23, and note how distinctly it is in connection with His redemptive work that Christ is set before us as our example; the giving His life away for others is its special significance.

what He had said by repeating what they had already heard spoken to themselves, 'He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.' The corn of wheat dying to rise again, losing its life to regain it multiplied manifold, is clearly set forth as the emblem not only of the Master but of each one of His followers. Loving life, refusing to die, means remaining alone in selfishness: losing life to bring forth much fruit in others is the only way to keep it for ourselves. There is no way to find our life but as Jesus did, in giving it up for the salvation of others. Herein is the Father, herein shall we be glorified. The deepest underlying thought of conformity to Christ's death is, giving our life to God for saving others. Without this, the longing for conformity to that death is in danger of being a refined selfishness.

How remarkable the exhibition we have in the Apostle Paul of this spirit, and how instructive the words in which the Holy Spirit in him expressed to us its meaning! To the Corinthians he says: 'Always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. So then *death worketh in us, but life in you.*' 'Though *He was crucified through weakness*, YET HE LIVETH by the power of God. For *we also are weak in Him*, but we shall LIVE WITH HIM BY THE POWER OF GOD TOWARD YOU' (2 Cor. iv. 10–12, xiii. 4). 'I now

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rejoice *in my sufferings for you*, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church' (Col. i. 24). These passages teach us how the vicarious element of the suffering that Christ bore in His body on the tree, to a certain extent still characterizes the sufferings of His body the Church. Believers who give themselves up to bear the burden of the sins of men before the Lord, who suffer reproach and shame, weariness and pain, in the effort to win souls, are filling up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh. The power and the fellowship of His suffering and death work in them, the power of Christ's life through them in those for whom they labour in love. There is no doubt that in the fellowship of His sufferings, and the conformity to His death in Phil. iii. Paul had in view not only the inner spiritual, but also the external bodily participations in the suffering of Christ.

And so it must be with each of us in some measure. Self-sacrifice not merely for the sake of our own sanctification, but for the salvation of our fellow-men, is what brings us into true fellowship with the Christ who gave Himself for us.

The practical application of these thoughts is very simple. Let us first of all try and *see* the truth the Holy Spirit seeks to teach us. As the most essential thing in likeness to Christ is likeness to His death, so the most essential thing in likeness to His death is the giving up our life to win others to God. It is a death in which all thought of

saving self is lost in that of saving others. Let us pray for the light of the Holy Ghost to show us this, until we learn to feel that we are in the world just as Christ was, to give up self, to love and serve, to live and die, 'EVEN AS the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.' Oh that God would give His people to know their calling; that they do not belong to themselves, but to God *and to their fellow-men;* that, even as Christ, they are only to live to be a blessing to the world.

Then let us *believe* in the grace that is waiting to make our experience of this truth a reality. Let us believe that God accepts of our giving up of our whole life for His glory in the saving of others. Let us believe that conformity to the death of Jesus in this, its very life-principle, is what the Holy Ghost will work out in us. Let us above all believe in Jesus: it is He Himself who will take up every soul that in full surrender yields itself to Him, into the full fellowship of His death, of His dying in love to bring forth much fruit. Yes, let us believe, and believing seek from above, as the work and the gift of Jesus, likeness to Jesus in this too.

And let us at once begin and *act* this faith. Let us put it into practice. Looking upon ourselves now as wholly given up, just like Christ, to live and die for God in our fellow-men, let us with new zeal exercise the ministry of love in winning souls. As we wait for Christ to work out His likeness, as we trust the Holy Spirit to give His mind in us more perfectly, let us in faith begin at once to act

as followers of Him who only lived and died to be a blessing to others. Let our love open the way to the work it has to do by the kindness, and gentleness, and helpfulness, with which it shines out on all whom we meet in daily life. Let it give itself to the work of intercession, and look up to God to use us as one of His instruments in the answering of those prayers. Let us speak and work for Jesus as those who have a mission and a power from on high which make us sure of a blessing. Let us make soul-winning our object. Let us band ourselves with the great army of reapers the Lord is sending out into His harvest. And ere we thought of it, we shall find that giving our life to win others for God is the most blessed way of dying to self, of being even as the Son of man was, a servant and a Saviour of the lost.

O most wonderful and inconceivably blessed likeness to Christ! He gave Himself to men, but could not really reach them, until, giving Himself *a sacrifice to God* for them, the seed-corn died, the life was poured out; then the blessing flowed forth in mighty power. I may seek to love and serve men; I can only really influence and bless them as I yield myself *unto God* and give up my life into His hands for them; as I lose myself as an offering on the altar, I become in His spirit and power in very deed a blessing. My spirit given into His hands, He can use and bless me.

O most blessed God! dost Thou in very deed

ask me to come and give myself, my very life, wholly, even unto the death, to Thee for my fellow-men? If I have heard the words of the Master aright, Thou dost indeed seek nothing less.

O God! wilt Thou indeed have me? Wilt Thou in very deed in Christ permit me, like Him, as a member of His body, to live and die for those around me? to lay myself, I say it in deep reverence, beside Him on the altar of death, crucified with Him, and be a living sacrifice to Thee for men? Lord! I do praise Thee for this most wonderful grace. And now I come, Lord God! and give myself. Oh for the grace of Thy Holy Spirit to make the transaction definite and real! Lord! here I am, given up to Thee, to live only for those whom Thou art seeking to save.

Blessed Jesus! come Thyself, and breathe Thine own mind and love within me. Take possession of me, my thoughts to think, my heart to feel, my powers to work, my life to live, as given away to God for men. Write it in my heart: it is done, I am given away to God, He has taken me. Keep Thou me each day as in His hands, expecting and assured that He will use me. On Thy giving up Thyself followed the life in power, the outbreaking of the blessing in fulness and power. It will be so in Thy people too. Glory be to Thy name. Amen.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Meekness.

'Behold, thy King cometh, meek.'—MATT. xxi. 5.
'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls.'—MATT. xi. 29.

It is on His way to the cross that we find the first of these two words written of our Lord Jesus. It is in His sufferings that the meekness of Jesus is specially manifested. Follower of Jesus! who art so ready to take Thy place under the shadow of His cross, there to behold the Lamb slain for thy sins, is it not a precious thought, that there is one part of His work, as the suffering Lamb of God, in which Thou mayest bear His image and be like Him every day? thou canst be meek and gentle even as He was.

Meekness is the opposite of all that is hard or bitter or sharp. It has reference to the disposition which animates us towards our inferiors. 'With meekness,' ministers must instruct those that oppose themselves, teach and bring back the erring (Gal. vi. 1; 2 Tim. ii. 25). It expresses our disposition towards superiors: we must 'receive the

word with meekness' (Jas. i. 21); if the wife is to be in subjection to her husband, it must be in a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price (1 Pet. iii.). As one of the fruits of the Spirit, meekness ought to characterize all our daily intercourse with fellow-Christians, and extend to all with whom we have to do (Eph. iv. 2; Gal. v. 22; Col. iii. 12; Tit. iii. 2). It is mentioned in Scripture along with humility, because that is the inward disposition concerning oneself, out of which meekness towards others springs.

There is perhaps none of the lovely virtues which adorn the image of God's Son, which is more seldom seen in those who ought to be examples. There are many servants of Jesus, in whom much love to souls, much service for the salvation of others, and much zeal for God's will, are visible, and yet who continually come short in this. How often, when offence comes unexpectedly, whether at home or abroad, they are carried away by temper and anger, and have to confess that they have lost the perfect rest of soul in God! There is no virtue, perhaps, for which some have prayed more earnestly: they feel they would give anything, if in their intercourse with partner, or children, or servants, in company or in business, they could always keep their temper perfectly, and exhibit the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Unspeakable is the grief and disappointment experienced by those who have learnt to long for it, and yet have not discovered where the secret of meekness lies.

The self-command needed for this seems to some so impossible, that they seek comfort in the belief that this blessing belongs to a certain natural temperament, and is too contrary to their character for them ever to expect it. To satisfy themselves they find all sorts of excuses. They do not mean it so ill: though the tongue or the temper be sharp, there is still love in their hearts: it would not be good to be too gentle; evil would be strengthened by it. And thus the call to entire conformity to the holy gentleness of the Lamb of God is robbed of all its power. And the world is strengthened in its belief, that Christians are after all not very much different from other people, because, though they do indeed say, they do not show, that Christ changes the heart and life after His own image. And the soul suffers itself, and causes unspeakable harm in Christ's Church, through its unfaithfulness in appropriating this blessing of salvation: the bearing the image and likeness of God.

This grace is of great price in the sight of God. In the Old Testament there are many glorious promises for the meek, which were by Jesus gathered up into this one, 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth' (see Ps. xxv. 9, lxxvi. 9; Prov. iii. 34; Jer. ii. 3). In the New Testament, its praise consists in this, that it is His meekness that gives its supernatural incomparable beauty to the image of our Lord. A meek spirit is of great price in God's sight; it is the choicest ornament of the Beloved Son. The Father

could surely offer no higher inducement to His children, to seek it above all things.

For every one who longs to possess this spirit, Christ's word is full of comfort and encouragement: 'Learn of me that I am meek.' And what will it profit us to learn that *He is meek?* Will not just the experience of His meekness make the discovery of our want of it all the more painful? What we ask, Lord, is that Thou shouldest teach us how *we* may be meek. The answer is again: 'Learn of *me*, that I AM MEEK.'

We are in danger of seeking meekness and the other graces of our Lord Jesus as gifts of which we must be conscious, before we practise them. This is not the path of faith. 'Moses knew not that his face shone,' he had only seen the glory of God. The soul that seeks to be meek, must learn that Jesus is meek. We must take time to gaze on His meekness, until the heart has received the full impression: He only is meek: with Him alone can meekness be found. When we begin to realize this, we next fix our hearts upon the truth: This meek One is *Jesus the Saviour.* All He is, all He has, is for His redeemed ones; His meekness is to be communicated to us. But He does not impart it, by giving, as it were from Himself, something of it away to us. No! we must learn that He alone is meek, and that only when He enters and takes possession of heart and life, He brings His meekness with Him. It is with the meekness of Jesus that we can be meek.

We know how little He succeeded in making His disciples meek and lowly while on earth. It was because He had not yet obtained the new life, and could not yet bestow, through His resurrection, the Holy Spirit. But now He can do it. He has been exalted to the power of God from thence to reign in our hearts, to conquer every enemy, and continue in us His own holy life. Jesus was our visible Example on earth, that we might see in Him what like the hidden life is that He would give us from heaven, that He Himself would be within us.

'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart:' without ceasing the word sounds in our ears as our Lord's answer to all the sad complaints of His redeemed ones, as to the difficulty of restraining temper. O my brother! why is Jesus, your Jesus, your life, and your strength, why is He the meek and lowly One, if it be not to impart to you, to whom He so wholly belongs, His own meekness?

Therefore, only believe! Believe that Jesus is able to fill your heart with His own spirit of meekness. Believe that Jesus Himself will, through His own Spirit, accomplish in you the work that you have in vain endeavoured to do. 'BEHOLD! THY KING COMETH TO THEE, MEEK.' Welcome Him to dwell in your heart. Expect Him to *reveal Himself to you.* Everything depends on this. Learn of Him that He is meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest to your soul.

Precious Saviour, grant me now, under the over-

shadowing of Thy Holy Spirit, to draw near unto Thee, and to appropriate Thy heavenly meekness as my life. Lord, Thou hast not shown me Thy meekness as a Moses who demands but does not give. Thou art Jesus who savest from all sin, giving in its stead Thy heavenly holiness. Lord, I claim Thy meekness as a part of the salvation that Thou hast given me. I cannot do without it. How can I glorify Thee if I do not possess it? Lord, I will learn from Thee that Thou art meek. Blessed Lord, teach me. And teach me that Thou art always with me, always in me as my life. Abiding in Thee, with Thee abiding in me, I have Thee the meek One to help me and make me like Thyself.

O holy meekness! Thou art not come down to earth only for a short visit, then to disappear again in the heavens. Thou art come to seek a home. I offer Thee my heart; come and dwell in it.

Thou blessed Lamb of God, my Saviour and Helper, I count on Thee. Thou wilt make Thy meekness to dwell in me. Through Thy indwelling Thou dost conform me to Thy image. O come, and as an act of Thy rich free grace even now, as I wait on Thee, reveal Thyself as my King, meek, and coming in to take possession of me for Thyself.

'Precious, gentle, holy Jesus,
Blessed Bridegroom of my heart,
In Thy secret inner chamber,
Thou wilt show me *what Thou art.* **Amen.**'

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

Abiding in the Love of God.

'*Even as* the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: abide in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; *even as* I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love.'—JOHN xv. 9, 10.

OUR blessed Lord not only said, 'Abide in me,' but also, 'Abide in my love.' Of the abiding in Him, the principal part is the entering into and dwelling and being rooted in that wonderful love with which He loves us and gives Himself to us. 'Love seeketh not its own;' it always goes out of itself to live and be at one with the beloved; it ever opens itself and stretches its arms wide to receive and hold fast the object of its desire: Christ's love longs to possess us. The abiding in Christ is an intensely personal relationship, the losing ourselves in the fellowship of an Infinite Love, finding our life in the experience of being loved by Him, being nowhere at home but in His love.

To reveal this life in His love to us in all its Divine beauty and blessedness, Jesus tells us that this love of His to us in which we are to abide,

is just the same as the Father's love to Him in which He abides. Surely, if anything were needed to make the abiding in His love more wonderful and attractive, this ought to do so. 'EVEN AS the Father loved me, so have I loved you: abide in my love.' Our life may be Christlike, unspeakably blessed in the consciousness of an Infinite Love embracing and delighting in us.

We know how this was the secret of Christ's wonderful life, and His strength in prospect of death. At His baptism the voice was heard, the Divine message which the Spirit brought and unceasingly maintained in living power, 'This is MY BELOVED Son, in whom I am well pleased.' More than once we read: 'The Father loveth the Son' (John iii. 35, v. 20). Christ speaks of it as His highest blessedness: 'That the world may know that Thou hast loved them, even as *Thou hast loved me; Thou lovedst me* before the foundation of the world;' 'That *the love wherewith Thou lovedst me* may be in them.' Just as we day by day walk and live in the light of the sun shining around us, so Jesus just lived in the light of the glory of the Father's love shining on Him all the day. It was as THE BELOVED OF GOD that He was able to do God's will, and finish His work. He dwelt in the love of the Father.

And just so we are THE BELOVED OF JESUS. EVEN AS the Father loved Him, He loves us. And what we need is just to take time, and, shutting our eyes to all around us, to worship and to wait

until we see the Infinite Love of God in all its power and glory streaming forth upon us through the heart of Jesus, seeking to make itself known, and to get complete possession of us, offering itself to us as our home and resting-place. Oh, if the Christian would but take time to let the wondrous thought fill him, 'I AM THE BELOVED OF THE LORD, Jesus loves me every moment, just as the Father loved Him,' how the faith would grow, that one who is loved as Christ was, must walk as He walked!

But there is a second point in the comparison. Not only is the Love we are to abide in like that in which He abode, but the way to our abiding is the same as His. As Son, Christ was in the Father's love when He came into the world; but it was only through obedience He could secure its continued enjoyment, could abide in it. Nor was this an obedience that cost Him nothing; no, but it was in giving up His own will, and learning obedience by what He suffered, in becoming obedient unto the death, even the death of the cross, that He kept the Father's commandments and *abode in His love.* 'Therefore doth my Father love me, *because* I lay down my life. This *commandment* have I received of my Father.' 'The Father hath not left me alone; *for I do* always those things that please Him.' And having thus given us His example, and proved how surely the path of obedience takes us up into the presence and love and glory of God, He invites us to follow Him. 'If ye keep my

commandments, ye shall abide in my love, EVEN AS I kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love.'

Christlike obedience is the way to a Christlike enjoyment of Love Divine. How it secures our boldness of access into God's presence! 'Let us love *in deed and in truth, hereby* shall we assure our hearts before Him.' 'Beloved! if our heart condemn us not, then have we *confidence towards God;* and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, *because we keep His commandments*, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.' How it gives us boldness before men, and lifts us above their approval or contempt, because we move at God's bidding, and feel that we have but to obey orders! And what boldness too in the face of difficulty or danger!—we are doing God's will, and dare leave to Him all responsibility as to failure or success. The heart filled with the thought of direct and entire obedience to God alone, rises above the world into the will of God, into the place where God's love rests on him: like Christ, he has his abode in the love of God.

Let us seek to learn from Christ what it means to have this spirit of obedience ruling our life. It implies the spirit of dependence; the confession that we have neither the right nor the desire in anything to do our own will. It involves teachableness of spirit. Conscious of the blinding influence of tradition, and prejudice, and habit, it takes its law not from men but from God Him-

self. Conscious of how little the most careful study of the Word can reveal God's will in its spiritual power, it seeks to be led, and for this end to be entirely under the rule of the Holy Spirit. It knows that its views of truth and duty are very partial and deficient, and counts on being led by God Himself to deeper insight and higher attainment.

It has marked God's word, 'If thou wilt diligently *hearken to the voice* of the Lord thy God, and wilt *do* that which is right in His sight,' and understood that it is only when the commands do not come from conscience, or memory, or the book, but from the *living voice* of the Lord heard speaking through the Spirit, that the obedience will be possible and acceptable. It sees that it is only as a following out of the Father's personal directions, and as a service rendered to Himself, that obedience has its full value and brings its full blessing. Its great care is to live on the altar, given up to God; to keep eye and ear open to God for every indication of His blessed will. It is not content with doing right for its own sake: it brings everything in personal relation to God Himself, doing it as unto the Lord. It wants every hour and every step in life to be a fellowship with God. It longs in little things and daily life to be consciously obeying the Father, because this is the only way to be prepared for higher work. Its one desire is the glory of God in the triumph of His will: its one means for obtaining that desire, with all its heart and strength to be working out that will each moment

of the day. And its one but sufficient reward is this, it knows that through the will of God lies the road, opened up by Christ Himself, deeper into the love of God: 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.'

Oh this blessed Christlike obedience, leading to a Christlike abiding in the Divine Love! To attain it we must just study Christ more. He emptied Himself, and humbled Himself, and *became obedient.* May He empty us and humble us too! He *learned obedience* in the school of God, and being made perfect, became the author of eternal salvation to all *that obey Him.* We must yield ourselves to be taught obedience by Him! We just need to listen to what He has told us how He did nothing of Himself, but only what He saw and heard from the Father; how entire dependence and continual waiting on the Father was the root of implicit obedience, and this again the secret of ever-growing knowledge of the Father's deeper secrets. (John v. 19, 20. See Fifteenth Day.) God's love and man's obedience there are as the lock and key fitting into each other. It is God's grace that has fitted the key to the lock, it is man who uses the key to unlock the treasures of love.

In the light of Christ's example and words, what new meaning comes to God's words spoken to His people from of old! 'In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee, *because thou hast obeyed my voice.*' 'If ye will indeed *obey my voice,* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto

me.' 'The Lord shall *greatly bless* thee, if thou *only carefully hearken* unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all these commandments.' Love and obedience indeed become the two great factors in the wonderful intercourse between God and man. The Love of God, giving Himself and all He has to man; the obedience of the believer in that Love, giving himself and all he has to God.

We have heard a good deal in these later years of full surrender and entire consecration, and thousands praise God for all the blessing He has given them through these words. Only let us beware that we be not led too much, in connection with them, to seek for a blessed experience to be enjoyed, or a state to be maintained, while the simple downright doing of God's will to which they point is overlooked. Let us take hold and use this word which God loves to use: obedience. 'To obey is better than sacrifice:' self-sacrifice is nothing without, is nothing but, obedience. It was the meek and lowly obedience of Christ, as of a servant and a son, that made His sacrifice such a sweet-smelling savour; it is humble, childlike obedience, first hearkening gently to the *Father's voice*, and then doing that which is right *in His sight*, that will bring us the witness that we please Him.

Dear reader! shall not this be our life? so simple, and sublime: obeying Jesus, and abiding in His Love.

O my God! what shall I say to the wonderful interchange between the life of heaven and the life of earth Thou hast set before me? Thy Son, our blessed Lord, has shown and proved to us how it is possible on this earth of ours, and how unspeakably blessed, for a man to live with the love of God always surrounding him, by just yielding himself to obey Thy voice and will. And because He is ours, our Head and our Life, we know that we can indeed in our measure live and walk as we see Him do; our souls every moment abiding and rejoicing in Thy Divine Love, because Thou acceptest our feeble keeping of Thy commandments for His sake. O my God, it is indeed too wonderful, that we are called to this Christlike dwelling in love through the Christlike obedience Thy Spirit works!

Blessed Jesus! how can I praise Thee for coming and bringing such a life on earth and making me a sharer in it. O my Lord! I can only yield myself afresh to Thee to keep Thy commandments, as Thou didst keep the Father's. Lord! only impart to me the secret of Thine own blessed obedience; the open ear, the watchful eye, the meek and lowly heart; the childlike giving up of all as the beloved Son to the beloved Father. Saviour! fill my heart with Thy love; in the faith and experience of that love I will do it too. Yes, Lord, this only be my life: keeping Thy commandments, and abiding in Thy love. Amen.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

Led by the Spirit.

'And Jesus, being *full of the Holy Spirit*, returned from Jordan, and *was led* by the Spirit into the wilderness.'—LUKE iv. 1.

'Be *filled* with the Spirit.'—EPH. v. 18.

'For as many as *are led* by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.'—ROM. viii. 14.

FROM His very birth the Lord Jesus had the Spirit dwelling in Him. But there were times when he needed special communications of the Spirit from the Father. Thus it was with His baptism. The descent of the Holy Spirit on Him, the baptism of the Spirit, given in the baptism with water, was a real transaction: He was filled with the Spirit. He returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit, and experienced more manifestly than ever the leading of the Spirit. In the wilderness He wrestled and conquered, not in His own Divine power, but as a man who was strengthened and led by the Holy Spirit. In this also 'He was in all things made *like* unto His brethren.'

The other side of the truth also holds good: the brethren are in all things made like unto Him

They are called to live like Him. This is not demanded from them without their having the same power. This power is the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, whom we have of God. Even as Jesus was filled with the Spirit, and then led by the Spirit, so must we be also filled with the Spirit and be led by the Spirit.

More than once, in our meditations on the different traits of Christ's character, it has seemed to us almost impossible to be like Him. We have lived so little for it: we feel so little able to live thus. Let us take courage in the thought: Jesus Himself could only live thus through the Spirit. It was after He was filled with the Spirit that He was led forth by that Spirit to the place of conflict and of victory. And this blessing is ours as surely as it was His: we may be filled with the Spirit; we may be led by the Spirit. Jesus, who was Himself baptized with the Spirit, to set us an example how to live, has ascended into heaven to baptize us into the likeness with Himself. He who would live like Jesus must begin here: He must be baptized with the Spirit. What God demands from His children He first gives. He demands entire likeness to Christ because He will give us, as He did Jesus, the fulness of the Spirit. We must be filled with the Spirit.

We have here the reason why the teaching of the imitation and likeness to Christ has so little prominence in the Church of Christ. Men sought it in their own strength, with the help of some

workings of the Holy Spirit: they did not understand that nothing less was needed than being filled with the Spirit. No wonder that they thought that real conformity to Christ could not be expected of us, because they had mistaken thoughts about being *filled with the Spirit.* It was thought to be the privilege of a few, and not the calling and duty *of every child of God.* It was not sufficiently realized that 'Be ye filled with the Spirit,' is a command to every Christian. Only when the Church first gives the baptism of the Spirit, and Jesus, as the Saviour *who baptizes with the Spirit* each one who believes in Him, their right place, only then will likeness to Christ be sought after and attained. People will then understand and acknowledge: to be like Christ we must be led by the same Spirit, and to be led by the Spirit as He was, we must be filled with the Spirit. Nothing less than the fulness of the Spirit is absolutely necessary to live a truly Christian, Christlike life.

The way to arrive at it is simple. It is Jesus who baptizes with the Spirit: he who comes to Him desiring it will get it. All that He requires of us is, the surrender of faith to receive what He gives.

The surrender of faith. What He asks is, whether we are indeed in earnest to follow in His footsteps, and for this to be baptized of the Spirit. Do not let there be any hesitation as to our answer. First, look back on all the glorious promises of His love and of His Spirit, in which the blessed privilege

is set forth: EVEN AS I, YE ALSO. Remember that it was of this likeness to Himself in everything He said to the Father: 'The glory which Thou gavest me have I given them.' Think how the love of Christ and the true desire to please Him, how the glory of God and the needs of the world, plead with us not through our sloth to despise this heavenly birthright of being Christlike. Acknowledge the sacred right of ownership Christ has in you, His blood-bought ones: and let nothing prevent your answering: 'Yes, dear Lord, as far as is allowed to a child of dust, I will be like Thee. I am entirely Thine; I must, I will, in all things bear Thy image. It is for this I ask to be filled with the Spirit.'

The surrender of faith: only this; but nothing less than this He demands. Let us give what He asks. If we yield ourselves to be like Him in all things, let it be in the quiet trust that He accepts, and at once begins in secret to make the Spirit work more mightily in us. Let us believe it although we do not at once experience it. To be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must wait on our Lord in faith. We can depend upon it that His love desires to give us more than we know. Let our surrender be made in this assurance.

And let this surrender of faith be entire. The fundamental law of following Christ is this: 'He who loses his life shall find it.' The Holy Spirit comes to take away the old life, and to give in its place the life of Christ in you. Renounce the old life of self-working and self-watching, and believe

that, as the air you breathe renews your life every moment, so naturally and continually the Holy Spirit will renew your life. In the work of the Holy Spirit in you there are no breaks or interruptions: you are in the Spirit as your vital air: the Spirit is in you as your life-breath: through the Spirit God works in you both to will and to do according to His good pleasure. Oh, Christian, have a deep reverence for the work of the Spirit who dwells within you. Believe in God's power, which works in you through the Spirit, to conform you to Christ's life and image moment by moment. Be occupied with Jesus and His life, that life which is at the same time your example and your strength, in the full assurance that the Holy Spirit knows in deep quiet to fulfil His office of communicating Jesus to you. Remember that the fulness of the Spirit is yours in Jesus, a real gift which you accept and hold in faith, even when there is not such feeling as you could wish, and on which you count to work in you all you need. The feeling may be weakness and fear and much trembling, and yet the speaking, and working, and living in demonstration of the Spirit and of power (1 Cor. ii. 3, 4). Live in the faith that the fulness of the Spirit is yours, and that you will not be disappointed if, looking unto Jesus, you rejoice every day in the blessed trust that the care of your spiritual life is in the hands of the Holy Spirit the Comforter. Thus, with the loving presence of Jesus in you, the living likeness to Jesus will be seen on

you; the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus dwelling within, the likeness of the life of Christ Jesus will shine around.

And if it do not appear that in thus believing and obeying your desires are fulfilled, remember that it is in the fellowship with the members of Christ's body, and in the full surrender to Christ's service in the world, that the full power of the Spirit is made manifest. It was when Jesus gave Himself to enter into full fellowship with men around Him, and like them to be baptized with water, that He was baptized with the Holy Ghost. And it was when He had given Himself in His second baptism of suffering, a sacrifice for us, that He received the Holy Spirit to give to us. Seek fellowship with God's children, who will with thee plead and believe for the baptism of the Spirit: the disciples received the Spirit not singly, but when they were with one accord in one place. Band thyself with God's children around thee to work for souls; the Spirit is the power from on high to fit for that work: the promise will be fulfilled to the believing, willing servants, who want Him not for their enjoyment, but for that work. Christ was filled with the Spirit that He might be fitted to work and live and die for us. Give thyself to such a Christlike living and dying for men, and thou mayest depend upon it, a Christlike baptism of the Spirit, a Christlike fulness of the Spirit, will be thy portion.

Blessed Lord! how wondrously Thou hast pro-

vided for our growing likeness to Thyself, in giving us Thine own Holy Spirit. Thou hast told us that it is His work to reveal Thee, to give us Thy Real Presence within us. It is by Him that all Thou hast won for us, all the life and holiness and strength we see in Thee, is brought over and imparted and made our very own. He takes of Thine, and shows it to us, and makes it ours. Blessed Jesus! we do thank Thee for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And now, we beseech Thee, fill us, oh fill us full, with Thy Holy Ghost! Lord! nothing less is sufficient. We cannot be led like Thee, we cannot fight and conquer like Thee, we cannot love and serve like Thee, we cannot live and die like Thee, unless like Thee we are full of the Holy Ghost. Blessed, blessed be Thy name! Thou hast commanded, Thou hast promised it; it may, it can, it shall be.

Holy Saviour! draw Thy disciples together to wait and plead for this. Let their eyes be opened to see the wondrous unfulfilled promises of floods of the Holy Spirit. Let their hearts be drawn to give themselves, like Thee, to live and die for men. And we know it will be Thy delight to fulfil Thine office, as He that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Glory be to Thy Name. Amen.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Life through the Father.

'*Even as* I live by the Father, *so he* that eateth me, even he shall live by me.'—JOHN vi. 57.

EVERY contemplation of a walk in the footsteps of Christ, and in His likeness, reveals anew the need of fixing the eye on the deep living union between the Forerunner and His followers. *Like Christ:* the longer we meditate on the word, the more we realize how impossible it is without that other: *In Christ.* The outward likeness can only be the manifestation of a living inward union. To do the same works as Christ, I must have the same life. The more earnestly I take Him for my example, the more I am driven to Him as my Head. Only an inner life essentially like His can lead us to a visible walk like His.

What a blessed word we have here, to assure us that His life on earth and ours are really like each other: '*Even as* I live by the Father, *so* he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.' If you desire to understand your life in Christ, what He will be for you and how He will work in you, you

have only to contemplate what the Father was for Him, and how He worked in Him. Christ's life in and through the Father is the image and the measure of what your life in and through the Son may be. Let us meditate on this.

As Christ's life was a life *hidden in God in heaven*, so must ours be. When He emptied Himself of His Divine glory, He laid aside the free use of His Divine attributes. He needed thus as a man to live by faith; He needed to wait on the Father for such communications of wisdom and power, as it pleased the Father to impart to Him. He was entirely dependent on the Father; His life was hid in God. Not in virtue of His own independent Godhead, but through the operations of the Holy Spirit, He spoke and acted as the Father from time to time taught Him.

Exactly so, believer, must your life be hid with Christ in God. Let this encourage you. Christ calls you to a life of faith and dependence, because it is the life He Himself led. He has tried it and proved its blessedness; He is willing now to live over again His life in you, to teach you also to live in no other way. He knew that the Father was His life, and that He lived through the Father, and that the Father supplied His need moment by moment. And now He assures you that as He lived through the Father, even so you shall live through Him. Take this assurance in faith. Let your heart be filled with the thought of the blessedness of this fulness of life, which is prepared for

you in Christ, and will be abundantly supplied as you need it. Do not think any more of your spiritual life, as something that you must watch over and nourish with care and anxiety. Rejoice every day that you need not live on your own strength, but in your Lord Jesus, even as He lived through His Father.

Even as Christ's life was *a life of Divine power*, although a life of dependence, so ours *will also be.* He never repented having laid aside His glory, to live before God as a man upon earth. The Father never disappointed His confidence, He gave Him all He needed to accomplish His work. Christ experienced that blessed as it was to be like God in heaven, and to dwell in the enjoyment of Divine perfection, it was no less blessed to live in the relation of entire dependence on earth, and to receive everything day by day from His hands.

Believer, if you will have it so, your life can be the same. The Divine power of the Lord Jesus will work in and through us. Do not think that your earthly circumstances make a holy life to God's glory impossible. It was just to manifest, in the midst of earthly surroundings which were even more difficult, the Divine life, that Christ came and lived on earth. As He lived so blessed an earthly life through the Father, so may ye also live your earthly life through Him. Only cultivate large expectations of what the Lord will do for you. Let it be your sole desire to attain to an entire union with Him. *It is impossible to say what the Lord*

Jesus would do for a soul who is truly willing to live as entirely through Him as He through the Father. Because just as He lived through the Father, and the Father made that life with all its work so glorious, so will you experience in all your work how entirely He has undertaken to work all in you.

As the life of Christ was *the manifestation of His real union with the Father, so ours also.* Christ says, 'Even as the Father has sent me, and I live by the Father.' When the Father desired to manifest Himself on earth in His love, He could entrust that work to no one less than His beloved Son, who was one with Him. It was because He was *Son* that the Father sent Him: it was because the Father had sent Him that it could not be otherwise, but He must care for His life. In the union upon which the mission rested, rested the blessed certainty that Jesus would live on earth through the Father.

'Even so,' Christ said, 'He that eateth me, liveth by me.' He had said before, 'He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in Him.' In death He had given His flesh and blood for the life of the world; through faith the soul partakes of the power of His death and resurrection, and receives its right to His life, as He had a right to His Father's life. In the words, 'Whosoever eateth Me,' is expressed the intimate union and unbroken communion with the Lord Jesus, which is the power of a life in Him. The one great work for the soul, who truly longs to live entirely and

only by Christ, is to eat Him, daily to feed on Him, to make Him his own.[1]

To attain this, seek continually to have your heart filled with a believing and lively assurance that all Christ's fulness of life is truly yours. Rejoice in the contemplation of His humanity in heaven, and the wonderful provision God has made through the Holy Spirit for the communication of this life of your Head in heaven, to flow unbroken and unhindered down upon you. Thank God unceasingly for the redemption in which He opened the way to the life of God, and for the wonderful life now provided for you in the Son. Offer yourself unreservedly to Him with an open heart and consecrated life that seeks His service alone. In such trust and consecration of faith, in the outpouring of love and cultivation of communion, with His words abiding in you, let Jesus be your daily food. He who eateth me shall live by me: even as the Father has sent me, and I live by the Father.

Beloved Christian! what think you? Does not the imitation of Christ begin to seem possible in the light of this promise? He who lives through Christ can also live like Him. Therefore let this wonderful life of Christ on earth through the Father be the object of our adoring contemplation, until our whole heart understands and accepts the word, '*Even so*, He who eateth me shall live through me.' Then we shall dismiss all care and anxiety, because the same Christ who set us the

[1] For the application of our text to the Lord's Supper, see Note.

example works in us from heaven that life which can live out the example. And our life will become a continual song: To Him who lives in us, in order that we may live like Him, be the love and praise of our hearts. Amen.

O my God! how shall I thank Thee for this wonderful grace! Thy Son became man to teach us the blessedness of a life of human dependence on the Father; He lived through the Father. It has been given us to see in Him how the Divine life can live and work, and conquer on earth. And now He is ascended into heaven, and has all power to let that life work in us, we are called to live even as He did on earth: we live through Him. O God, praised be Thy name for this unspeakable grace.

Lord, my God, hear the prayer that I now offer to Thee. If it may be, show me more, much more of Christ's life through the Father. I need to know it, O my God, if I am to live as He did! Oh, give me the spirit of wisdom in the knowledge of HIM. Then shall I know what I may expect from Him, what I can do through Him. It will then no longer be a struggle and an effort to live according to Thy will, and His example. Because I shall then know that His blessed life on earth is now mine, according to the word, 'Even as I through the Father, so ye through me.' Then shall I daily feed upon Christ in the joyful experience: I live through Him. O my Father! grant this in full measure for His name's sake. Amen.

NOTE.

Though the words of our Lord Jesus in the sixth of John were not spoken directly of the Lord's Supper, they are yet applicable to it, because they set forth that spiritual blessing of which the Holy Supper is the communication in a visible form. In eating the bread and drinking the wine, our spiritual life is not only strengthened because therein the pardon of our sins is signified and sealed to us, but because the Holy Spirit does indeed make us partakers of the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus as a spiritual reality. So one of our Reformed Church Catechisms, the Heidelberg (Qu. 78), puts it, 'What is it then to eat the broken body and drink the shed blood of Christ?' 'It is *not only* to embrace with a believing heart the sufferings and death of Christ, and so to obtain the pardon of sin and life eternal; but *moreover also* that we are united *to His sacred body* by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ and in us, *so that we*, though Christ be in heaven and we on earth, are nevertheless *flesh of His flesh and bones of His bones*.'

It is known that there are in our Protestant Churches three views of the Lord's Supper. On the one hand, the Lutheran with its consubstantiation, teaching that the body of our Lord is so present *in the bread*, that even an unbeliever eats no longer only bread, but the body of the Lord. On the other the Zwinglian view, according to which the effect of the Sacrament is a very impressive exhibition of the truth that the death of Christ is to us what wine and bread are to the body, and a very expressive confession of our faith in this truth, and so of our interest in the blessings of that death. As the Holy Spirit in the Word speaks to us through the ear, so in the Sacrament through the eye. Midway between these views is that of Calvin, who strongly urges that there is in it a mysterious blessing, not well to be expressed in words; that it is not enough to speak of the life which the Spirit gives to our spirit through faith,

but that there is a real communication by the Holy Spirit of the very flesh and blood of Jesus in heaven to our very body, so that in virtue of this we are called members of His body, and have His body in us as the seed of the spiritual body of the resurrection. While avoiding, on the one hand, the sacramentarian view of a change in the bread, it seeks to hold fast, on the other, the reality of a spiritual substantial participation of the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus.

This is not the place to enter on this more fully. But I am persuaded that, when a more scriptural view prevails as to the relation between *body* and *spirit*, it will not be thought strange to believe that without anything like a real presence in the bread itself, we are indeed fed with the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus. The *body* of our Lord is now a spiritual body, transfigured and glorified into the spirit-life of the heavenly world, the spirit and the body in perfect unity and harmony, so that now the Holy Spirit can freely dispense and communicate that body as He will. Our *body* is the temple of the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us; our *bodies* are members of Christ; our *mortal bodies* are even now being quickened and prepared by the indwelling Spirit for the resurrection (Rom. viii. 11): why should it be thought strange that by the Holy Spirit the communion *of the body* of Christ, so distinctly promised, should be, not an Old Testament symbol or shadow, but a blessed heavenly reality?

Calvin's words are as follows: 'I am not satisfied with the view of those who, while acknowledging that we have some kind of communion with Christ, only make us partakers of the Spirit, omitting all mention of flesh and blood.' 'In His humanity also the fulness of life resides, so that every one who communicates in His flesh and blood, at the same time enjoys the participation of life. *The flesh* of Christ is like a perennial fountain which transfuses into us the life flowing forth from the Godhead into itself. The communion of the flesh and blood of Christ is necessary to all who aspire

to the Christian life. Hence these expressions: "The Church is 'the body of Christ.'" "Our bodies are 'the members of Christ.'" "We are members of His body, of His flesh and His bones." What our mind does not comprehend, let faith receive, that the Spirit unites things separated by space. That sacred communion of flesh and blood by which Christ transfuses His life into us, just as if it penetrated our bones and marrow He testifies and seals in the Supper, not by representing a vain or empty sign, but by these exerting an efficacy of the Spirit by which He fulfils what He promises.' 'I willingly admit anything which helps to express the true and substantial communication of the body and blood of the Lord, as exhibited to believers under the sacred symbols of the Supper, understanding that they are not received by the imagination or the intellect merely, but are enjoyed in reality as the food of eternal life.' 'We say that Christ descends to us, as well by the external symbol as by His Spirit, that He may truly quicken our souls by the substance of His flesh and blood.' 'Such is the corporeal presence which the sacrament requires, and which we say is here displayed in such power and efficacy, that it not only gives our minds undoubted assurance of heavenly life, but also secures the immortality of our flesh.'[1]

To the soul who seeks fully to live by Christ as He did by the Father, the sacrament is a real spiritual blessing, something more than what faith in the word gives. Let all the praying and believing and living in which we seek to realize the wonderful blessing of living just as Christ did by the Father, ever culminate in our communion of the body and blood at the Lord's table. And let us go forth from each such celebration with new confidence, that what has been given and confirmed on the great day of the feast, will by Jesus Himself be maintained in power in the daily life through the more ordinary channels of His grace—the blessed fellowship with Himself in the word and prayer.

[1] Calvin's *Institutes*, iv. 17, § 7, 9, 10, 19, 24.

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THIRTIETH DAY.

—o—

LIKE CHRIST:

In glorifying the Father.

'Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, *that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.* I have glorified Thee on the earth.'—JOHN xvii. 1, 4.

'Herein *is my Father glorified, that ye* bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.'—JOHN xv. 8.

THE glory of an object is, that in its sort its intrinsic worth and excellence answers perfectly to all that is expected of it. That excellence or perfection may be so hidden or unknown, that the object has no glory to those who behold it. To *glorify* is to remove every hindrance, and so to reveal the full worth and perfection of the object, that its glory is seen and acknowledged by all.

The highest perfection of God, and the deepest mystery of Godhead, is His holiness. In it righteousness and love are united. As the Holy One He hates and condemns sin. As the Holy One He also frees the sinner from its power, and raises Him to communion with Himself. His name is, 'The Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer.' The song of redemption is: 'Great is the Holy One of Israel in the

midst of thee.' To the Blessed Spirit, whose special work it is to maintain the fellowship of God with man, the title of Holy in the New Testament belongs more than to the Father or the Son. It is this holiness, judging sin and saving sinners, which is the glory of God. For this reason the two words are often found together. So in the song of Moses: 'Who is like Thee, *glorious* in *holiness?*' So in the song of the Seraphim: '*Holy, Holy, Holy,* Lord God of hosts; the whole earth is full of His *glory.*' And so in the song of the Lamb: 'Who shall not *glorify* Thy Name? for Thou only art *Holy.*' As has been well said: 'God's glory is His manifested holiness; God's holiness is His hidden glory.'

When Jesus came to earth, it was that He might glorify the Father, that He might again show forth in its true light and beauty that glory which sin had so entirely hid from man. Man himself had been created in the image of God, that God might lay of His glory upon him, to be shown forth in him—that God might be glorified in him. The Holy Ghost says, 'Man is the image and glory of God.' Jesus came to restore man to his high destiny: He laid aside the glory which He had with the Father, and came in our weakness and humiliation, that He might teach us how to glorify the Father on earth. God's glory is perfect and infinite: man cannot contribute any new glory to God, above what He has: he can only serve as a glass in which the glory of God is reflected. God's holiness is His glory: as the holiness of God is seen

in him, God is glorified; His glory as God is shown forth.

Jesus glorified God *by obeying Him.* In giving His commandments to Israel, God continually said, 'Be ye holy, for I am holy:' in keeping them they would be transformed into a life of harmony with Him, they would enter into fellowship with Him as the Holy One. In His conflict with sin and Satan, in His sacrifice of His own will, in His waiting for the Father's teaching, in His unquestioning obedience to the Word, Christ showed that He counted nothing worth living for, but that men might understand what a blessed thing it is to let this holy God really BE GOD, His will alone acknowledged and obeyed. Because He alone is holy, His will alone should be done, and so His glory be shown in us.

Jesus glorified God *by confessing Him.* He not only in His teaching made known the message God had given Him, and showed us who the Father is. There is something far more striking. He continually spoke of His own personal relation to the Father. He did not trust to the silent influence of His holy life; He wanted men distinctly to understand what the root and aim of that life was. Time after time He told them that He came as a servant sent from the Father, that He depended upon Him and owed everything to Him, that He only sought the Father's honour, and that all His happiness was to please the Father, to secure His love and favour.

Jesus glorified God *by giving Himself for the work of His redeeming love.* God's glory is His holiness

and God's holiness is His redeeming love: love that triumphs over sin by conquering the sin and rescuing the sinner. Jesus not only told of the Father being the Righteous One, whose condemnation must rest on sin, and the Loving One who saves every one who turns from his sin, but He gave Himself to be a sacrifice to that righteousness, a servant to that love, even unto the death. It was not only in acts of obedience, or words of confession, that He glorified God, but in giving Himself to magnify the holiness of God, to vindicate at once His law and His love by His atonement. He gave Himself, His whole life and being, HIMSELF wholly, to show how the Father loved, and longed to bless, how the Father must condemn the sin, and yet would save the sinner. He counted nothing too great a sacrifice, He lived and died only for this, that the glory of the Father, the glory of His holiness, of His redeeming love, might break through the dark veil of sin and flesh, and shine into the hearts of the children of men. As He Himself expressed it in the last week of His life, when the approaching anguish began to press in upon Him: 'Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say —Father, save me from this hour? But for this came I unto the world: FATHER! GLORIFY THY NAME.' And the assurance came that the sacrifice was well-pleasing and accepted, in the answer: 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.'

It was thus Jesus as man was prepared to have part in the glory of God: He sought it in the

humiliation on earth; He found it on the throne of heaven. And so He is become our forerunner, leading many children to glory: He shows us that the sure way to the glory of God in heaven is to live only for the glory of God on earth. Yes, this is the glory of a life on earth: glorifying God here, we are prepared to be glorified with Him for ever.

Beloved Christian! is it not a wonderful calling, blessed beyond all conception, like Christ to live only to glorify God, to let God's glory shine out in every part of our life? Let us take time to take in the wondrous thought: our daily life, down to its most ordinary acts, may be transparent with the glory of God. Oh! let us study this trait as one that makes the wondrous image of our Jesus specially attractive to us: He glorified the Father. Let us listen to Him as He points us to the high aim, *that your Father in heaven may be glorified*, and as He shows us the way, *Herein is my Father glorified.* Let us remember how He told us that, when in heaven He answers our prayer, this would still be His object, and let in every breathing of prayer and faith it be our object too: '*That the Father may be glorified in the Son.*' Let our whole life, like Christ's, be animated by this as its ruling principle, growing stronger until in a holy enthusiasm our watchword has become: ALL, ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD. And let our faith hold fast the confidence that in the fulness of the Spirit there is the sure provision for our desire being fulfilled: 'Know ye not that your body is the temple of the

Holy Spirit, which is in you?—*therefore* glorify God in your body and in your spirit.'

If we want to know the way, let us again study Jesus. He obeyed the Father. Let simple downright obedience mark our whole life. Let an humble, childlike waiting for direction, a soldier-like looking for orders, a Christlike dependence on the Father's showing us His way, be our daily attitude. Let everything be done to the Lord, according to His will, for His glory, in direct relationship to Himself. Let God's glory shine out in the holiness of our life.

He confessed the Father: He did not hesitate to speak often of His personal relationship and intercourse, just as a little child would do of an earthly parent. It is not enough that we live right before men: how can they understand, if there be no interpreter? They need, not as a matter of preaching, but as a personal testimony, to hear that what we are and do is *because we love the Father, and are living for Him.* The witness of the life and the words must go together.[1]

And He gave Himself to the Father's work. So He glorified Him. He showed sinners that God has a right to have us wholly and only for Himself, that God's glory alone is worth living and dying for, and that as we give ourselves to this, God will most wonderfully use and bless us in leading others to see and confess His glory too. It was that men might glorify the Father in heaven, might find their

[1] See note.

blessedness also in knowing and serving this glorious God, that Jesus lived, and that we must live too. Oh! let us give ourselves to God for men; let us plead, and work, and live, and die, that men, our fellow-men, may see that God is glorious in holiness, that the whole earth may be filled with His glory.

Believer! 'the Spirit of God and of glory, the Spirit of holiness, rests upon you.' Jesus delights to do in you His beloved work of glorifying the Father. Fear not to say: O my Father, in Thy Son, *like Thy Son*, I will only live to glorify Thee.

O my God! I do pray Thee, show me Thy glory! I feel deeply how utterly impossible it is, by any resolution or effort of mine, to lift myself up or bind myself to live for Thy glory alone. But if Thou wilt reveal unto me Thy glory, if Thou wilt make all Thy goodness pass before me, and show me how glorious Thou art, how there is no glory but Thine; if, O my Father! Thou wilt let Thy glory shine into my heart, and take possession of my inmost being, I never will be able to do anything but glorify Thee, but live to make known what a glorious holy God Thou art.

Lord Jesus! who didst come to earth to glorify the Father in our sight, and ascend to heaven leaving us to do it now in Thy name and stead, oh! give us by Thy Holy Spirit a sight of how Thou didst it. Teach us the meaning of Thy obedience to the Father, Thine acknowledgment that, at any cost, His will must be done. Teach us to mark

Thy confession of the Father, and how Thou didst in personal testimony tell men of what He was to Thee, and what Thou didst feel for Him, and let our lips too tell out what we taste of the love of the Father, that men may glorify Him. And above all, oh! teach us that it is in saving sinners that redeeming love has its triumph and its joy, that it is in holiness casting out sin that God has His highest glory. And do Thou so take possession of our whole hearts that we may love and labour, live and die, for this one thing, 'That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.'

O my Father! let the whole earth, let my heart, be filled with Thy glory. Amen.

NOTE.

'Let us begin by considering what was the groundwork of the whole beauty and harmony of our blessed Saviour's character. Love to the Father was the ruling motive of His life. It so pervaded His nature as to find expression, directly or indirectly, in every word as well as every action. It will be well if we try to realize something of the perfect simplicity with which that love was so continually shown forth in daily life.

'We especially need to remind ourselves of how entirely this was the case, because, in these days of artificial manners, and of false shame, we are so frequently tempted to conceal our true motives, and to think it a disgrace if we are led into any sign of betraying our deepest religious feelings. We conceal them from those who

would not understand them, lest perchance they should scorn our judgment, and wound our self-respect; and we too frequently even hide them from those who are of like mind with ourselves, lest they too might think us lacking in good taste. Self fears the slightest rebuke, the merest breath of disapproval. So long as our love to God is weak enough to allow of its being hidden, self will carefully hide it, rather than run the least risk of being considered deficient in discretion.

'Of true discretion, which is quite a different thing, we shall find abundant examples in our Master's life. But that false discretion, which strives to divert notice, not from ourselves, but from the deepest principles of our conduct, and in order to save our own selfish feelings from being wounded, finds no counterpart whatever in the life of our Lord. In His earthly nature, as man, Christ loved the Lord His God with all His heart, and with all His strength. And this all-pervading love could not but assert itself continually. Our Lord simply and unhesitatingly referred to it as a simple fact, whenever the slightest occasion for doing so arose. It was His avowed object *that the world should know that He loved the Father*. He frequently and emphatically alluded to *His personal connection with the Father* as the means by which He lived: it was His consciousness of that union which gave Him unfailing support.

'Jesus Christ made known the Father's love; He was sent that He might reveal *the deep blessedness of belonging wholly to God*. Even so are we sent, each one of us into the world, in order that we may make the Saviour known to those around us. Through our own intimate and personal connection with Himself, we are each one of us to reveal the Son, even as He revealed the Father. And this we can only do by acting as He did, by continually *proving how all-sufficient is the sense of union with Himself*.'[1]

[1] From a chapter on the example left us by Christ, in a little book containing many precious thoughts, *Steps on the Upward Path; or Holiness unto the Lord*. By A. M. James. Religious Tract Society.

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

LIKE CHRIST:

In His Glory.

'We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, *even as He* is pure.'—1 JOHN iii. 2, 3.

'And I appoint unto you a kingdom, *even as* my Father hath appointed unto me.'—LUKE xxii. 29.

GOD'S glory is His holiness. To glorify God is to yield ourselves that God in us may show forth His glory. It is only by yielding ourselves to be holy, to let His holiness fill our life, that His glory can shine forth from us. The one work of Christ was to glorify the Father, to reveal what a glorious Holy God He is. Our one work is, like Christ's, so by our obedience, and testimony, and life, to make known our God as 'glorious in holiness,' that He may be glorified in heaven and earth.

When the Lord Jesus had glorified the Father on earth, the Father glorified Him with Himself in heaven. This was not only His just reward; it was a necessity in the very nature of things. There is no other place for a life given up to the glory of God, as Christ's was, than in that glory

The law holds good for us too: a heart that yearns and thirsts for the glory of God, that is ready to live and die for it, becomes prepared and fitted to live in it. *Living to God's glory* on earth is the gate to *living in God's glory* in heaven. If with Christ we glorify the Father, the Father will with Christ glorify us too. Yes, we shall be like Him in His glory.

We shall be like Him in *His spiritual glory*, the glory of His holiness. In the union of the two words in the name of the Holy Spirit, we see that what is HOLY and what is SPIRITUAL stand in the closest connection with each other. When Jesus as man had glorified God by revealing, and honouring, and giving Himself up to His holiness, he was as man taken up into and made partaker of the Divine glory.

And so it will be with us. If here on earth we have given ourselves to have God's glory take possession of us, and God's holiness, God's Holy Spirit, dwell and shine in us, then our human nature with all our faculties, created in the likeness of God, shall have poured into and transfused through it, in a way that passes all conception, the purity and the holiness and the life, the very brightness of the glory of God.

We shall be like Him *in His glorified body*. It has been well said: Embodiment is the end of the ways of God. The creation of man was to be God's masterpiece. There had previously been spirits without bodies, and animated bodies without spirits, but

in man there was to be a spirit in a body lifting up and spiritualizing the body into its own heavenly purity and perfection. Man as a whole is God's image, his body as much as his spirit. In Jesus a human body—O mystery of mysteries!—is set upon the throne of God, is found a worthy partner and container of the Divine glory. Our bodies are going to be the objects of the most astonishing miracle of Divine transforming power: 'He will fashion our vile body like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.' The glory of God as seen in our bodies, made like Christ's glorious body, will be something almost more wonderful than in our spirits. We are 'waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.'

We shall be like Him *in His place of honour.* Every object must have a fit place for its glory to be seen. Christ's place is the central one in the universe: the throne of God. He spake to His disciples, 'Where I am, there shall my servant be. If any man serve me, *him will my Father honour.*' 'I appoint you a kingdom, EVEN AS my Father hath appointed me; that ye may eat and drink at my table, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' To the Church at Thyatira He says: 'He that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, EVEN AS I received of my Father.' And to the Church at Laodicea: 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit on my throne, EVEN AS I overcame

and am set down with my Father on His throne.' Higher and closer it cannot be: 'EVEN AS we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also of the heavenly.' The likeness will be complete and perfect.

Such Divine God-given glimpses into the future reveal to us, more than all our thinking, what intense truth, what Divine meaning there is in God's creative word: 'Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.' To show forth the likeness of the Invisible, to be partaker of the Divine Nature, to share with God His rule of the universe, is man's destiny. His place is indeed one of unspeakable glory. Standing between two eternities, the eternal purpose in which we were predestinated to be conformed to the image of the first-born Son, and the eternal realization of that purpose when we shall be like Him in His glory, we hear the voice from every side: O ye image-bearers of God! on the way to share the glory of God and of Christ, live a Godlike, live a Christlike life!

'I shall be satisfied when I awake with THY LIKENESS,' so the Psalmist sung of old. Nothing can satisfy the soul but God's image, because for that it was created. And this not as something external to it, only seen but not possessed; it is as partaker of that likeness that we shall be satisfied. Blessed they who here long for it with insatiable hunger; they shall be filled. This, the very likeness of God, this will be the glory, streaming down on them from God Himself, streaming through them

whole being, streaming out from them through the universe. 'When Christ who is our life shall be manifested, we also shall be manifested with Him in glory.'

Beloved fellow-Christians! nothing can be made manifest in that day that has not a real existence here in this life. If the glory of God is not our life here, it cannot be hereafter. It is impossible; him alone who glorifies God here, can God glorify hereafter. 'Man is the image and glory of God.' It is as you bear the image of God here, as you live in the likeness of Jesus, who is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, that you will be fitted for the glory to come. If we are to be as the image of the heavenly, the Christ in glory, we must first bear the image of the earthly, the Christ in humiliation.

Child of God! Christ is the uncreated image of God. Man is His created image. On the throne in the glory the two will be eternally one. You know what Christ did, how He drew near, how He sacrificed all, to restore us to the possession of that image. Oh, shall we not at length yield ourselves to this wonderful love, to this glory inconceivable, and give our life wholly to manifest the likeness and the glory of Christ. Shall we not, like Him, make the Father's glory our aim and hope, living to His glory here, as the way to live in His glory there.

The Father's glory: it is in this that Christ's glory and ours have their common origin. Let *the Father* be to us what He was to Him, and the Father's

glory will be ours as it is His. All the traits of the life of Christ converge to this as their centre. He was Son; He lived as Son; God was to Him FATHER. As Son He sought the Father's glory; as Son He found it. Oh! let this be our conformity to the image of the Son, that THE FATHER is the all in all of our life; the Father's glory must be our everlasting home.

Beloved brethren! who have accompanied me thus far in these meditations on the image of our Lord, and the Christlike life in which it is to be reflected, the time is now come for us to part. Let us do so with the word, 'WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM, for we shall see Him as He is. He who hath this hope in Him purifieth Himself, EVEN AS He is pure.' LIKE CHRIST! let us pray for each other, and for all God's children, that in ever-growing measure this may be the one aim of our faith, the one desire of our heart, the one joy of our life. Oh, what will it be when we meet in the glory, when we see Him as He is, and see each other all like Him!

Ever blessed and most glorious God! what thanks shall we render Thee for the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, and for the light of Thy glory which shines upon us in Him! And what thanks shall we render Thee, that in Jesus we have seen the image not only of Thine, but of our glory, the pledge of what we are to be with Thee through eternity!

O God! forgive us, forgive us for Jesus' blood's sake, that we have so little believed this, that we have so little lived this. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst reveal to all who have had fellowship with each other in these meditations, what THE GLORY is in which they are to live eternally, in which they can be living even now, as they glorify Thee. O Father! awaken us and all Thy children to see and feel what Thy purpose with us is. We are indeed to spend eternity in Thy glory: Thy glory is to be around us, and on us, and in us; we are to be like Thy Son in His glory. Father! we beseech Thee, oh visit Thy Church! Let Thy Holy Spirit, the Spirit of glory, work mightily in her; and let this be her one desire, the one mark by which she is known: the glory of God resting upon her.

Our Father! grant it for Jesus' sake. Amen.

On preaching Christ our Example.

'LET us make man IN OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS:' in these words of the Council of Creation, with which the Bible history of man opens, we have the revelation of the Eternal purpose to which man owes his existence, of the glorious eternal future to which he is destined. God proposes to make a GODLIKE CREATURE, a being who shall be His very image and likeness, the visible manifestation of the glory of the Invisible One.

To have a being, at once created and yet Godlike, was indeed a task worthy of Infinite Wisdom. It is the nature and glory of God that He is absolutely independent of all else, having life in Himself, owing His existence to none but Himself alone. If man is to be Godlike, he must bear His image and likeness in this too, that he must become what he is to be, of his own free choice; he must make himself. It is the nature and glory of the creature to be dependent, to owe everything to the Blessed Creator. How can the contradiction be reconciled?—a being at once dependent and yet self-determined, created and yet Godlike. In man the mystery is solved. As a creature God gives him life, but endows him with the wonderful power of a free will; it is only in the process of a personal and voluntary appropriation that anything so high and holy as likeness to God can really become his very own.

When sin entered, and man fell from his high destiny, God did not give up His purpose. Of His revelation in Israel the central thought was: 'Be ye holy, as I am holy.' Likeness to God in that which constitutes His highest perfection is to be Israel's hope. Redemption had no higher ideal than Creation had revealed; it could only take up and work out the Eternal purpose.

It was with this in view that the Father sent to the earth the Son who was the express Image of His person. In Him the God-likeness to which we had been created, and which we had personally to appropriate and make our own, was revealed in human form: He came to show to us at once the Image of God and our own image. In looking upon Him, the desire after our long-lost likeness to God was to be awakened, and that hope and faith begotten which gave us courage to yield ourselves to be renewed after that Image. To accomplish this, there was a twofold work He had to do. The one was *to reveal in His life the likeness of God*, so that we might know what a life in that likeness was, and understand what it was we had to expect and accept from Him as our Redeemer. When He had done this, and shown us *the likeness of the life of God* in human form, He died that He might win for us, and impart to us, His own life as *the life of the likeness of God*, that in its power we might live in the likeness of what we had seen in Him. And when He ascended to heaven, it was to give us in the Holy Spirit the power of that life He had first set before us and then won to impart to us.

It is easy to see how close the connection is between these two parts of the work of our Lord, and how the one depends upon the other. For what as our Example He had in His life revealed, He as our Redeemer by His death purchased the power. His earthly life showed the path, His heavenly life gives the power, in which we are to walk. What God hath joined together no man may separate. Whoever does not stand in the full faith of the Redemption, has not the strength to follow the Example. And whoever does not seek conformity to the Image as the great object of the Redemption, cannot fully enter into its power. Christ lived on earth that He might show forth *the image of God in His life:* He lives in heaven that we may show forth *the image of God in our lives.*

The Church of Christ has not always maintained the due relation of these two truths. In the Roman Catholic Church the former of the two was placed in the foreground, and the following of Christ's example pressed with great earnestness. As the fruit of this, she can point to no small number of saints who, notwithstanding many errors, with admirable devotion sought literally and entirely to bear the Master's image. But to the great loss of earnest souls, the other half of the truth was neglected, that only they who in the power of Christ's death receive His life within them, are able to imitate His life as set before them.

The Protestant Churches owe their origin to the revival of the second truth. The truth of God's pardoning and quickening grace took its true place

to the great comfort and joy of thousands of anxious souls. And yet here the danger of onesidedness was not entirely avoided. The doctrine that Christ lived on earth, not only to die for our redemption, but to show us how we were to live, did not receive sufficient prominence. While no orthodox Church will deny that Christ is our Example, *the absolute necessity* of following the example of His life is not preached with the same distinctness as that of trusting the atonement of His death. Great pains are taken, and that most justly, to lead men to accept the merits of His death. As great pains are not taken, and this is what is not right, to lead men to accept the imitation of His life as the one mark and test of true discipleship.

It is hardly necessary to point out what influence the mode of presenting this truth will exercise in the life of the Church. If atonement and pardon be everything, and the life in His likeness something secondary, that is to follow as a matter of course, the chief attention will be directed to the former. Pardon and peace will be the great objects of desire; with these attained, there will be a tendency to rest content. If, on the other hand, conformity to the image of God's Son be the chief object, and the atonement the means to secure this end, as the fulfilment of God's purpose in creation, then in all the preaching of repentance and pardon, the true aim will ever be kept in the foreground; faith in Jesus and conformity to His character will be regarded as inseparable. Such a Church will produce real followers of the Lord.

In this respect the Protestant Churches need still to go on unto perfection. Then only will the Church put on her beautiful garments, and truly shine in the light of God's glory, when these two truths are held in that wondrous unity in which they appear in the life of Christ Himself. *In all He suffered for us, He left us an example* that we should follow in His footsteps. As the banner of the cross is lifted high, *the atonement of the cross* and *the fellowship of the cross* must equally be preached as the condition of true discipleship.

It is remarkable how distinctly this comes out in the teaching of the blessed Master Himself. In fact, in speaking of the cross, He gives its fellowship more prominence than its atonement. How often He told the disciples that they must bear it with Him and like Him; only thus could they be disciples, and share in the blessings His cross-bearing was to win. When Peter rebuked Him as He spoke of His being crucified, He did not argue as to the need of the cross in the salvation of men, but simply insisted on its being borne, because to Him as to us the death of self is the only path to the life of God. The disciple must be as the Master. He spoke of it as the instrument of self-sacrifice, the mark and the means of giving up our own life to the death the only path for the entrance upon the new Divine life He came to bring. It is not only I who must die, He said, but you too; the cross, the spirit of daily self-sacrifice, is to be the badge of your allegiance to me. How well Peter learnt the lesson we see in his Epistle. Both the

remarkable passages in which he speaks of the Saviour suffering for us—('Christ suffered *for us;* who bare our sins upon the tree;' 'He suffered. the just *for the unjust*')—are brought in almost incidentally in connection with our suffering like Him. He tells us that as we gaze upon the Crucified One, we are not only to think of the cross as the path in which Christ found His way to glory, but as that in which each of us is to follow Him.

The same thought comes out with great prominence in the writings of the Apostle Paul. To take one Epistle, that to the Galatians; we find four passages in which the power of the cross is set forth. In one we have one of the most striking expressions of the blessed truth of substitution and atonement: 'Being made *a curse for us*, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' This is indeed one of the foundation-stones on which the faith of the Church and the Christian rests. But a house needs more than foundation-stones. And so we find that no less than three times in the Epistle the fellowship of the cross, as a personal experience, is spoken of as the secret of the Christian life. 'I have been crucified with Christ.' 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts.' 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' That Christ bore the cross for us is not all; it is but the beginning of His work. It does but open the way to the full exhibition of what the cross can do as we are taken up into a lifelong fellowship with Him the

Crucified One, and in our daily life we experience and prove what it is to be crucified to the world. And yet how many earnest and eloquent sermons have been preached on glorying in the cross of Christ, in which Christ's dying on the cross for us has been expounded, but our dying with Him, in which Paul so gloried, has been forgotten!

The Church does indeed need to have this second truth sounded out as clearly as the first. Christians need to understand that bearing the cross does not in the first place refer to the trials which we call crosses, but to that daily giving up of life, of dying to self, which must mark us as much as it did Jesus, which we need in times of prosperity almost more than in adversity, and without which the fulness of the blessing of the cross cannot be disclosed to us. It is the cross, not only as exhibited on Calvary, but as gloried in on account of its crucifying us, its spirit breathing through all our life and actions, that will be to the Christian and the Church as it was to Christ, the path to victory and to glory, the power of God for the salvation of men.

The Redemption of the cross consists of two parts—Christ bearing the cross, Christ's crucifixion for us, as our atonement, the opening up of the way of life; our crucifixion, our bearing the cross with Christ, as our sanctification, our walking in the path of conformity to His blessed likeness. Christ the Surety and Christ the Example must equally be preached.

But it will not be sufficient that these two truths be set forth as separate doctrines; they can exercise their full power only as their inner unity is found

in the deeper truth of Christ our Head. As we see how union with the Lord Jesus is the root in which the power of both the Surety and the Example has its life, and how the one Saviour makes us partakers both of the atonement and the fellowship of His cross, we shall understand how wonderful their harmony is, and how indispensable both are to the welfare of the Church. We shall see that as it is Jesus who opened up the way to heaven *as much by the footsteps He left us to tread in as by the atonement He gave us to trust in*, so it is the same Jesus who gives us pardon through His blood, and conformity to Himself through His Spirit. And we shall understand how for both faith is the only possible path. The life-power of this atonement comes through faith alone; the life-power of the example no less so. Our Evangelical Protestantism cannot fulfil its mission until the grand central truth of *salvation by faith alone* has been fully applied, not only to justification, but to sanctification too, that is, to the conformity to the likeness of Jesus.

The preacher who desires in this matter to lead his people in the path of entire conformity to the Saviour's likeness, will find a very wide field indeed opened up to him. The Christlike life is like a tree, in which we distinguish the *fruit*, the *root*, and the *stem* that connects the two. As in individual effort, so in the public ministry, THE FRUIT will probably first attract attention. The words of Christ, 'Do ye even as I have done,' and the frequent exhortations in the Epistles to love, and forgive, and forbear, even as Christ did, lead first to a

comparison of the actual life of Christians with His, and to the unfolding and setting up of that only rule and standard of conduct which the Saviour's example is meant to supply. The need will be awakened of taking time and looking distinctly at each of the traits of that wonderful Portrait, so that some clear and exact impressions be obtained from it of what God actually would have us be. Believers must be brought to feel that the life of Christ is in very deed the law of their life, and that complete conformity to His example is what God expects of them. There may be a difference in measure between the sun shining in the heavens and a lamp lighting our home here on earth; still the light is the same in its nature, and in its little sphere the lamp may be doing its work as beautifully as the sun itself. The conscience of the Church must be educated to understand that the humility and self-denial of Jesus, His entire devotion to His Father's work and will, His ready obedience, His self-sacrificing love and kindly beneficence, are nothing more than what each believer is to consider it his simple duty as well as his privilege to exhibit too. There is not, as so many think, one standard for Christ and another for His people. No; as branches of the vine, as members of the body, as partakers of the same spirit, we may and therefore must bear the image of the Elder Brother.

The great reason why this conformity to Jesus is so little seen, and in fact so little sought after among a large majority of Christians, is undoubtedly to be found in erroneous views as to our impotence,

and what we may expect Divine grace to work in us. Men have such strong faith in the power of sin, and so little faith in the power of grace, that they at once dismiss the thought of our being expected to be just as loving, and just as forgiving, and just as devoted to the Father's glory as Jesus was, as an ideal far beyond our reach; beautiful indeed, but never to be realized. God cannot expect us to be or do what is so entirely beyond our power. They confidently point to their own failure in earnest attempts to curb temper and to live wholly for God, as the proof that the thing cannot be.

It is only by the persistent preaching of Christ our Example, in all the fulness and glory of this blessed truth, that such unbelief can be overcome. Believers must be taught that God does not reap where He has not sown, that the fruit and THE ROOT are in perfect harmony. God expects us to strive to speak and think and act exactly like Christ, because *the life that is in us is exactly the same as that which was in Him.* We have a life like His within us; what more natural than that the outward life should be like His too? Christ living in us is the root and strength of Christ's acting and speaking through us, shining out from us so as to be seen by the world.

It is specially the preaching of Christ our Example, *to be received by faith alone*, that will be needed to lead God's people on to what their Lord would have them be. The prevailing idea is that we have to believe in Jesus as our Atonement and our Saviour, and then, under the influence of the

strong motives of gratitude and consistency, to strive to imitate His example. But motives cannot supply the strength; the sense of impotence remains; we are brought again under the law: we ought to, but cannot. These souls must be taught what it means *to believe in Christ their Example.* That is, to claim by faith His Example, His Holy Life, as part of the salvation He has prepared for them. They must be taught to believe that this Example is not a something, not even a some one outside of them, but the living Lord Himself, their very Life, who will work in them what He first gave them to see in His earthly life. They must learn to believe that if they will submit themselves to Him, He will manifest Himself in them and their life-walk in a way passing all their thoughts; to believe that *the Example of Jesus and the conformity to Him* is a part of that Eternal Life which came down from heaven, and *is freely given to every one that believeth.* It is because we are one with Christ, and abide in Him, because we have in us the same Divine life He had, that we are expected to walk like Him.

The full insight into this truth, and the final acceptance of it, is no easy matter. Christians have become so accustomed to a life of continual stumbling and unfaithfulness, that the very thought of their being able with at least such a measure of resemblance as the world must recognise, to show forth the likeness of Christ, has become strange to them. The preaching that will conquer their unbelief, and lead God's people to victory, must be animated by a joyous and triumphant faith. For it

is only to faith, a faith larger and deeper than Christians ordinarily think needful for salvation, that the power of Christ's example taking possession of the whole life will be given. But when Christ in His fulness, Christ as the Law and the Life of the believer, is preached, this deeper faith, penetrating to the very root of our oneness of life with Him, will come, and with it the power to manifest that life.

The growth of this faith may in different cases vary much. To some it may come in the course of quiet persevering waiting upon God. To others it may come as a sudden revelation, after seasons of effort, of struggling and failure; just one full sight of what Jesus as the Example really is, *Himself being and giving* all He claims. To some it may come in solitude—where there is none to help but the living God Himself alone. To others it will be given, as it has been so often, in the communion of the saints, where amid the enthusiasm and love which the fellowship of the Spirit creates, hearts are melted, decision is strengthened, and faith is stirred to grasp what Jesus offers when He reveals and gives Himself to make us like Himself. But, in whatever way it come, it will come when Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit is preached as God's revelation of what His children are to be. And believers will be led, in the deep consciousness of utter sinfulness and impotence, to yield themselves and their life as never before into the hands of an Almighty Saviour, and to realize in their experience the beautiful harmony between the apparently contradictory words: 'In me, that is, in my flesh,

dwelleth no good thing;' and, 'I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me.'

But root and fruit are ever connected by a STEM, with its branches and leaves. In the life of Christ this was so too. The connection between His hidden life rooted in God, and that life manifesting itself in the fruit of holy words and works, was maintained by His life of conscious and continual personal fellowship with the Father. In His waiting on the Father, to see and hear what He had to make known, in His yielding Himself to the leadings of the Spirit, in His submission to the teachings of the Word which He came to fulfil, in His watching unto prayer, and in His whole life of dependence and faith, Christ became our Example. He had so truly been made like unto us in all things, become one with us in the weakness of the flesh, that it was only thus that the life of the Father could be kept flowing freely into Him and manifesting itself in the works He did. And just so it will be with us. Our union to Jesus, and His life in us, will most certainly secure a life like His. This not, however, in the way of an absolute necessity, as a blind force in nature works out its end; but in the way of an intelligent, willing, loving co-operation—a continual coming and receiving from Him in the surrender of faith and prayer, a continual appropriating and exercising of what we receive in watchful obedience and earnest effort, a continual working because we know He works in us. The faith in the vitality and the energy of the life in which we are eternally rooted will not lead to sloth or carelessness, but, as with Christ,

rouse our energies to their highest power. It is the faith in the glorious possibilities that open up to us in Christ our life, that will lead to the cultivation of all that constitutes true personal fellowship and waiting upon God.

It is in these three points of similarity that the Christlike life must be known; our life like Christ's hidden *in God*, maintained like His in fellowship *with God*, will in its external manifestation be like His too, a life *for God*. As believers rise to apprehend the truth, we are indeed like Christ in the life we have in God through Him; we can be like Christ in the keeping up and strengthening of that life in fellowship with God; we shall be like Christ in the fruits which such a life must bear; the name of followers of Christ, the imitation of Christ, will not be a profession but a reality, and the world will know that the Father has indeed loved us as He loved the Son.

I venture to suggest to all ministers and Christians who may read this, the inquiry whether, in the teaching and the thought of the Church, we have sufficiently lifted up Christ as the Divine Model and Pattern, in likeness to whom alone we can be restored to the Image of God in which we were created. The more clearly the teachers of the Church realize the eternal ground on which a truth rests, its essential importance to other truths for securing their complete and healthy development, and the share it has in leading into the full enjoyment of that wonderful salvation God has prepared for us, the better will they be able to guide God's people into the blessed possession of that glorious

life of high privilege and holy practice which will prepare them for becoming such a blessing to the world as God meant them to be. It is the one thing that the world needs in these latter days—men and women of Christlike lives, who prove that they are in the world as He was in the world, that the one object of their existence is nothing other than what was Christ's object—the glorifying of the Father and the saving of men.

One word more. Let us above all beware lest in the preaching and seeking of Christlikeness that secret but deadly selfishness creeps in, which leads men to seek it for the sake of getting for themselves as much as is to be had, and because they would fain be as eminent in grace and as high in the favour of God as may be. God is love: the image of God is Godlike love. When Jesus said to His disciples: 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,' He told them that perfection was loving and blessing the unworthy. His very names tell us that all the other traits of Christlikeness must be subordinate to this one: seeking the will and glory of God in loving and saving men. He is Christ the Anointed: the Lord hath anointed Him—for whom? for the broken-hearted and the captive; for them that are bound and them that mourn. He is Jesus; living and dying to save the lost. There may be a great deal of Christian work with little of true holiness or of the spirit of Christ. But there can be no large measure of real Christlike holiness without a distinct giving up oneself to make the salvation of sinners for the glory of God the object of our life. He gave

HIMSELF FOR US, that He might claim US FOR HIMSELF, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. HIMSELF FOR US, and US FOR HIMSELF: an entire exchange, a perfect union, a complete identity in interest and purpose. HIMSELF FOR US as Saviour, US FOR HIMSELF still as Saviour; like Him and for Him to continue on earth the work He began. Whether we preach the Christlike life in its deep inner springs, where it has its origin in our oneness with Him in God, or in its growth and maintenance by a life of faith and prayer, of dependence and fellowship with the Father, or in its fruits of humility and holiness and love, let us ever keep this in the foreground. The one chief mark and glory of the Christ is that He lived and died and lives again for this one thing alone: THE WILL AND THE GLORY OF THE GOD OF LOVE IN THE SALVATION OF SINNERS. And to be Christlike means simply this: to seek the life and favour and Spirit of God only, that we may be entirely given up to the same object: THE WILL AND THE GLORY OF THE GOD OF LOVE IN THE SALVATION OF SINNERS.

THE END.

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